



www.nepaltimes.com

# NEPALI Times

#150 20 - 26 June 2003 16 pages Rs 25

been there yet?

Metro Mall Soaltee Crowne Plaza Complex, Tahachal Ph: 4 283233

## THE MALL

for all...

Bring your children for free video games while you shop!

11 day all night all day all night all day all

Times nepalnews.com Weekly Internet Poll #90

Q. Who do you think is primarily responsible for the current state of the nation?

Only P. Koirala	40.38%
King	30.38%
Don't Know	6.28%
Maoists	11.14%
Other	1.02%
Western K. Nepal	4.74%
Shree B. Deuba	4.00%

Total votes: 3,211

Weekly Internet Poll #91. To vote go to: www.nepaltimes.com

Q. If the election were to be held next week, who would you like to see as our next prime minister to lead the country?

# One country, two systems

Absolutely FREE

More Details on PAGE 15.

McQuay



Near Jumla, farmers use the ceasefire to ready terraces for paddy.

Welcome to Patan Museum Café

Opening from 1030 - 1930 hrs

Enjoy our new Cocktail & Snacks of the Week from 1700 - 1930 hrs

For reservations please call 552 6271, 552 4694

Summit Hotel

**MOHAN MAINALI**  
from JUMLA, KALIKOT and DOLPA

It's not that the Maoists are everywhere, it's just the government is nowhere to be seen. Except for the district headquarters of these three roadless mid-western districts, there are no police posts, no post offices—no presence at all of the Nepali state. And everywhere there is evidence of one country and two systems: people pay two taxes, there are two kinds of courts, two permits for everything, two armies,

two governments. To be sure, the ceasefire has eased the lives of most people somewhat. Many from the outlying villages can now travel relatively unhindered to the main bazaar towns to collect subsidised rice. Some farmers have returned to their home villages to plant paddy. There are instances of cooperation: the CDO in Jumla walks down to Tatopani to talk to local Maoists to ease restrictions on villagers. The Maoists recently requested a government health

team to conduct a vasectomy camp in their village. "It is better. We don't have to worry anymore about the possibility of getting killed while gathering fodder, or fetching water," says one villager in Dolpa. "We're just afraid the war may start again." It is an indication of the fear still stalking the land that he doesn't want to be named or photographed. The Maoists and security forces are still eyeball to eyeball, and things could flare up any moment. Indeed, there have been several brief

firefights this week in Dang and Jajarkot. There have also been instances of resistance: some refugee families in Kalikot who were prevented from going back to their villages pelted Maoists with stones at a recent rally. Paru Thapa in Jumla summarises it all: "We obeyed the Ranas and during the Panchayat we did what we were told. Democracy came and we followed. Tomorrow there may be another system and we will have to listen to them too. We can never say we won't obey." [see p4](#)

Lilium Oriental Mix

Flora Incorporated Trade

45624

# Nepal feels the heat over Tibet deportations

**NAVIN SINGH KHADKA**

What does the world's only superpower gain by punishing one of the world's poorest countries? Plenty. It mollifies the powerful Tibet lobby back home and defends controversial United States economic interests. Private investors close to the US establishment, legislators and lobbyists sympathetic to the Tibet cause have been retaliating against Nepal for the deportation of 18 Tibetan refugees last month, and over a payment dispute in the joint-venture Bhote Kosi hydropower project. A move in the US Senate to withdraw a bill granting Nepali garments duty and quota free imports was already on the cards from powerful Texan investors involved in Bhote Kosi. (See 'The price we pay for power', #142). But the Tibetan deportation was the last straw for legislators backing the garment quota bill. In this David vs Goliath contest Nepal is being punished with threats of aid cut-off, tourism boycotts, and withdrawal of trade privileges. (See also 'Tibet Tibet' p 3). "The United States uses human rights or terrorism whenever and wherever it suits their national interest," explains political science professor Dhurba Kumar at Tribhuban University. "This latest US pressure on Nepal is designed for that purpose." The reaction over the deportations in the United States is seen by some Nepalis as being disproportionate, selective and hypocritical. "Nepal has taken care of 100,000 Bhutani refugees for 12 years, Bhutan is about to wash its hands off them, and yet when 18 Tibetans are deported all hell breaks loose," one

Bhutani refugee in Kathmandu told us. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif) who withdrew the garment import bill is the wife of businessman David Blum, chairman of the American Himalayan Foundation that helps Tibetan refugees in Nepal. Citing the deportations in a letter to the Royal Nepali Embassy in Washington, Feinstein wrote: "...under these circumstances, I do not believe I can in good conscience proceed at this time to move the Nepalese garment legislation in the US Senate." In Kathmandu, it is clear the deportations were carried out under pressure from Beijing. But the government, already beholden to Washington for military hardware, is in full damage-control mode. A senior cabinet member told us: "We have decided it was a mistake, and are trying to convince the Americans it will not happen again." The government seems convinced that the bill can be revived if Nepal atones for its sins, but it must do this without putting off China. "The ball is in Nepal's court," says Constance Jones, a US embassy spokesperson in Kathmandu. "It must start lobbying for the bill with Senator Feinstein and the US Congress right away." But for some foreign policy analysts in Kathmandu, this is classic American arm-twisting. "The Americans know perfectly well Nepal has to live with China," said one source. "But because they can't punish China, they bully little Nepal just to show their domestic Tibet lobby that they are doing something."

Protester trying to prevent bus carrying deported Tibetans from leaving Kathmandu for Kodari on 31 May.

Protester trying to prevent bus carrying deported Tibetans from leaving Kathmandu for Kodari on 31 May.

Weekend Summer Package

Park Village Hotel & Resort

Swimming & Lavish Buffet Lunch - Rs. 400/-

Full board, swimming, cinema, billiard & other Recreational activities for couple with one child below 10 years

Rate - Rs. 4000 /-

Tel: 4 375 280 pvh@vlink.com.np

Baskin 31 Robbins

Where the world goes for ice cream

Baskin 31 Robbins Parlour

Tridevi Marg, Thamel

Tel: 4216217 Fax: 4418653

Cakes & Bakes : 4423555

Email: b31r@mos.com.np





# Monsoon session, soon

## Hints of a house revival have created ripples in the cesspool of Nepali politics.

**A**long with his appointment as prime minister, Surya Bahadur Thapa was invested with executive authority by King Gyanendra. This is an implicit acceptance that the cabinet of Lokendra Bahadur Chand had no such powers. The logic can then easily be extended to argue that most decisions taken by ministers in the outgoing cabinet are legally suspect.

Unless endorsed by the person with executive authority, they may be null and void. Chand's cabinet colleagues may have been competent and clean, but it appears they had no right to do what they did for over six months.

Now that the king has given Madhab Nepal what he has been asking for all along—a government with 'full executive powers'—his agitated statements sound like sour grapes. By dithering to back the campaign that parliament be restored through a political settlement, the UML lost its chance.

In the hopeless pursuit of picking the fruit without resolving the issue of the ownership of the tree first, the UML has wasted six months. When there is no parliament, the king is under no compulsion to pick Madhab over Keshab, or any other Janardan off the street for that matter.

For all his faults, at least Girija Prasad Koirala has been consistent in his demand that the people need to

reassert their sovereignty. Koirala should have realised by now that more than the constitution itself, it's the intention of the ruler that really matters. To keep the authoritarian intentions of ambitious kings in check, the dispersal of state authority over a number of competing institutions of the state is the single most important issue at present.

But Koirala's political plan of action has yet to extend beyond the demand of limiting the royal 'Shree Panch' title and bringing the Royal Nepali Army under control of parliament. That's like arguing about who owns the tree without figuring out who owns the land on which it stands. Unless the constitution is reframed—either through major amendments or total rewriting—there is no way Koirala's daydreams can be realised any time soon.

The Maoists seem even more confused about their short-term goals. Pushpa Kamal Dahal is warning Nepalis to be aware of American designs in the region. Ram Bahadur Thapa is promising to turn Nepal into another Vietnam. Baburam Bhattarai is saluted smartly by the foot soldiers of the 'old regime' when he is cruising along national highways named after former Shah kings.

It is hard to figure out what the comrades want. They seem bent on scrapping the constitution without a clue about what to replace it with—just like the instant verdicts of their rural kangaroo courts. In their doctrine: if there is a dispute about ownership of the fruit, just chop down the tree.

Nepali politics is a stage where the main actors are all playing their part without any idea of their role in the drama being enacted. Members of the Thapa cabinet appear like zombies traipsing along the corridors of Singha Darbar which are haunted by the ghosts of regimes past. All this would be wildly funny if it wasn't so serious. The only way to resolve the issue of constitutional amendments is to let the peoples' representatives debate it. In any parliamentary democracy, showing one's majority on the floor of the house is the sole way of staking a lawful claim of forming a government.

Only a legislative body can give legality to a truce reached between the insurgents and the government. The question of executive power will remain unresolved as long as its rightful claimant doesn't emerge through due parliamentary process.

Had there been a more assertive Speaker than Taranath Ranabhat, parliament would have revived itself when the government failed to conduct elections for the formation of a new house within the constitutionally stipulated period of six months.

The new government spokesperson and Information and Communication Minister Kamal Thapa may not have spoken for his leader, but there is little doubt that his broad hints of reviving the house has created ripples in the cesspool of Nepali politics.

Re-activating the democratic self-cleaning process is not just an exigency any more, it is a matter of political urgency. Let Sher Bahadur Deuba make a spectacle of himself on the floor of the house. Grant Koirala his right to retreat from parliamentary politics by telling it first to his fellow lawmakers. And wish Nepal luck as he fantasises about Baluwatar.

Democracy is a lousy political system, but the absolute monarchists and peoples' republicans should realise that the alternatives are worse. ♦

## LEARNING EDUCATION

**W**hy are private schools the target of everyone's wrath? Every time anyone wants to make a political point around here, they force schools to shut. In effect, our way of taking revenge on political rivals is to punish our own children. Very few societies in the world have shown such consistently self-destructive behaviour.

Earlier this month, the five main political parties signed a declaration making schools Zones of Peace. When we asked the parties why it is that they are once more threatening an indefinite closure of schools throughout the land, they washed their hands off it. It's not us, they said, it's the student unions.



How convenient. It has become standard operating procedure for the vision-challenged party leadership to use their affiliated student unions to take aim at schools in order to create maximum social disruption with minimum effort. A few phone calls threatening violence usually does the trick.

The truth is that the student wings of parliamentary parties are competing with the Maoist student wing for the radical edge.

The unions have always been the street wing of political parties, either parliamentary or underground. They have now chosen the most vulnerable target: the one that can't fight back.

It is worth reminding ourselves that one of the main reasons for the rot in our school system is the mismanagement and corruption over the past 13 years by the mentors of the same student unions that are shutting down schools today. Successive elected governments abdicated their responsibility to provide affordable quality education even though the period saw the largest-ever infusion of foreign aid into the sector. So, private schools filled the vacuum. Without help from anyone, Nepali educationists created institutions of learning as good as anywhere else in the region.

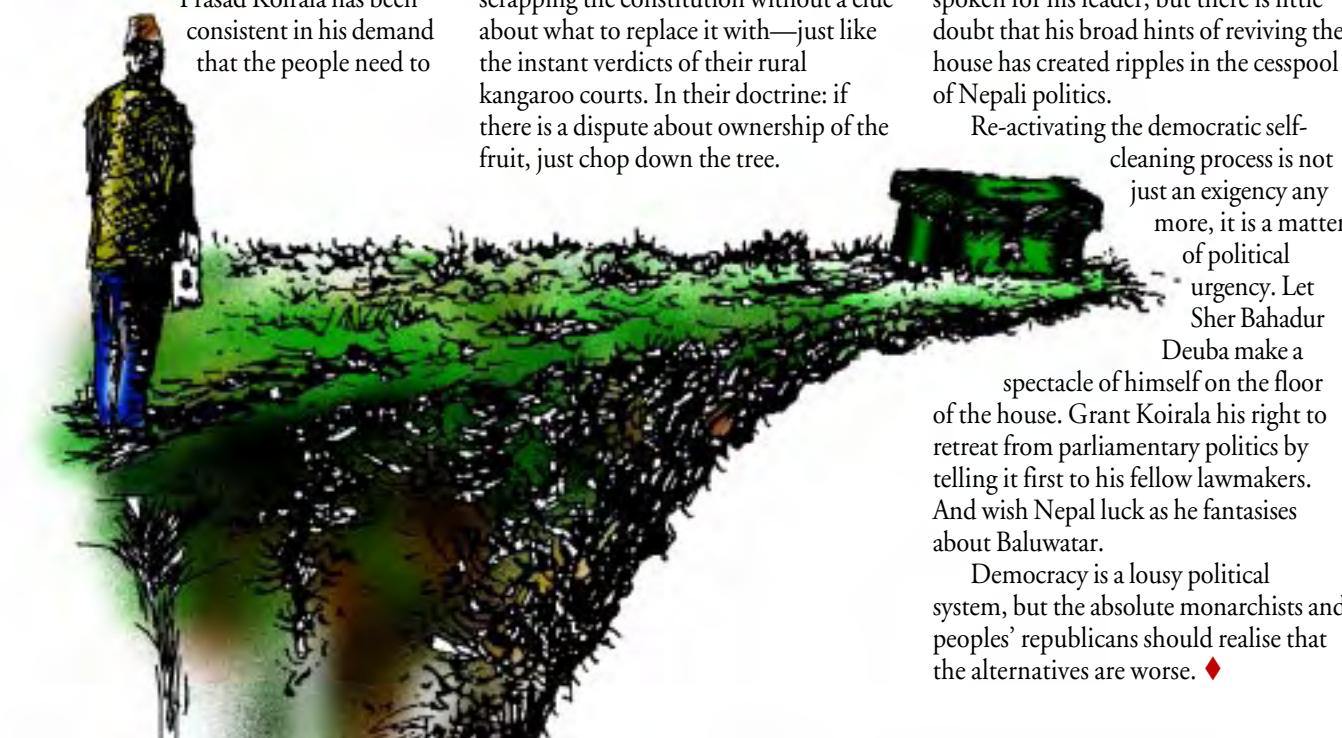
The success of the private school system would expose the politicians' failure. So today, we have the parties using their present confrontation with the king to let their student wings paralyse the education system.

To be sure, there is something seriously wrong with an education system in which only 30 percent pass high school exams.

This week we had our annual reminder of just how low the quality of education in government schools has sunk. While many private schools have 100 percent first division rates, most government schools have a 100 percent failure rate. So, do we punish the private schools for being more successful?

Our system stigmatises the 70 percent of the 170,000 children who didn't make it through SLC this year as "failures". Cumulatively, over the past ten years alone there have been half-a-million young Nepalis who have been branded failures. Unless efforts are made to bring them into the job market in Nepal or abroad with skills training, this is going to be a socio-economic catastrophe. This is not the time to linger with long-term plans: the crisis is too serious and a solution is required urgently.

If the political parties, the government or the Maoists are seriously concerned about the future of this country, they should start putting their heads together to figure out what they are going to do to defuse this bomb. After all, it will be ticking no matter who rules.



## LETTERS

### THAPADOM

Manjushree Thapa's 'Thapadom' (#149) was a subtle but serious mockery of a failed system. Sadly, our state never saw governance as something that should be inclusive. The solution is not in picking the elitist force of Fulbright or Oxford scholars to tame policies with overseas generic theories



which only work better in seminars, and not at the grassroots. Maybe even the writer has missed the gravity of the matter. Our system has never been able to escape feudalism. The exclusive elite brigades that have ruled this country over the years have made an impression that sovereignty could only be protected and harnessed by these elite classes. It is hard to believe that a government which is so exclusive would ever be able to deliver development to the Nepali people.

Pramesh Aryal, Kopundole

• I am a Thapa by birth and I am truly proud of my roots. Yet should we be talking 'us and them' in this day and age? What are the implications? Is Manjushree Thapa encouraging racism? I have lived here in the UK for six years and the division between various castes is appalling. Identifying each other through caste and communal

prisms is detrimental to our society. Why should it matter whether anyone is a Thapa or not? I totally disapprove of such inflammatory articles.

Dr Arati Thapa Hamal Wakefield, UK

• I found Manjushree Thapa's 'Thapadom' hilarious. Since Kunda Dixit's 'Under My Hat' has been losing its comic edge of late, might I suggest that Manjushree Thapa take over this column?

Bamsaraj Khatri, Kathmandu

• I really enjoyed reading Manjushree Thapa's 'Thapadom'. At the risk of piquing the suspicions of an already paranoid public, perhaps it's the Thapas' turn to rule Nepal for the next 104 years. Manjushree's delightfully flippant under-spin to a potentially cloak-and-dagger subject was indeed welcome at a time when the future of our battered nation is uncertain. Levity—a nectar so sweet and rare for the

despondent—came through refreshingly this past Friday. And speaking of mutterings at family gatherings, if you think Chhetris are bad, you should attend one of our Newari family gatherings! We leave no caste, creed, ethnicity, animal, mineral or vegetable verbally unmolested by the time the family gathering has ended. We cut on everyone, including Newars. Our clan are EOMs (Equal Opportunity Mutterers). Thank you, Manjushree. May we be fortunate enough to sample more of your charming tongue-in-cheek commentaries again. By the way, which side of the block do you come from: Rue de Magars or Chhetri Boulevard?

S B Shrestha, Kopundole

• Manjushree Thapa's 'Thapadom' fails to acknowledge the contributions of other groups in serving the nation and scores off the remaining 23 million Nepalis. In a Nepal where 'horizontal society' is becoming

increasingly acceptable, her pronouncements sets us all back by at least a few hundred years.

The nauseating utterances, particularly where she has deliberately and repeatedly distinguishes between a 'Chhetri Thapa' and a 'Magar Thapa' (implying that the former is somehow a superior breed than the latter) is one of the most disgusting racial slurs I have ever observed in Nepali media. I have news: It is only a matter of time when Ram Bahadur Thapa 'Badal' may get on top of the state affairs.

As to the question what non-Thapas make of the appointment of SB Thapa as prime minister, I will play the devil's advocate and argue that in present circumstance, the issue has no rationale. In a bid to resolve a stalemate, the king has appointed 'a Thapa', the same way he had earlier appointed 'a Chand' and sacked 'a Deuba'. I don't think race, caste and social status have been a selection criteria. Let's wait

and see what SB Thapa has up his sleeves this time around. I am sure the PM is clever enough not to tread on Manjushree Thapa's dumb doctrine of 'Thapadom'. Or else, his days in the Singha Darbar will be numbered.

Kiran Chalise, Sydney

### SCHOOLS

As a teacher and parent, I fully agree with Sarita Khatri (Letters, #149) against the political targeting of schools by student unions. Let us look at the students' main demands one by one:

1. All private schools to immediately register as trusts and not as private companies. Unless the constitution is changed, it is unconstitutional of the 'student leaders' to make such a demand.
2. Uniformity in the curriculum in private and government schools and text books. All private and government schools are required to take the Grade VIII, X and SLC and therefore use the government curriculum. To think

# Tibet, Tibet



**Tibet activists must realise that further strangling Nepal's near-dead economy will not encourage positive change on the part of the kingdom's policy makers.**

Never mind the Maoist insurgency, every politically correct tourist now has a new reason to avoid Nepal. On 9 June, a California-based group called Ethical Traveler ([www.ethicaltraveler.com](http://www.ethicaltraveler.com)) announced a tourism boycott of Nepal.

Why? To protest Nepal's forcible deportation of 18 Tibetan refugees into China on 31 May. Several major international Tibetan rights groups have endorsed the boycott, including The Tibet Justice Center, Students for a Free Tibet, US Tibet Committee, and The Milarepa Fund.

Ethical Traveler and its director, occasional ex-pat Jeff Greenwald, are right to criticise the actions of the Nepali government and to demand a forceful protest. But they are wrong to think that a tourism boycott of Nepal is the best way to achieve the desired effect.

A prominent Tibetan rights activist called the boycott "a simplistic, kneejerk reaction to a very complicated and serious situation," pointing out that Nepal makes an easy target for the international activist community too intimidated to challenge China directly. If the objective is to ensure Tibetan rights, why not take on the real bully by calling for a broad-based US-led international boycott of Chinese trade?

Would-be tourist-activists must be told that further strangling Nepal's near-dead tourist economy will not encourage positive change on the part of the kingdom's policy makers. In fact, the weaker the economy gets, the greater the incentive for political players of all stripes to curry favour with China in the hopes of reaping future economic and political rewards.

The people most likely to be negatively affected by a boycott are common Nepalis and refugee Tibetans already resident in Nepal who survive off tiny pieces of the tourist pie. Ethical Traveler has claimed that the

boycott will have little true economic impact on individual Nepalis. This is a spurious suggestion when an individual shortfall of as little as Rs 100 a day can have serious effects on whole families who exist at the bottom of the tourism totem pole.

In the improbable event that this is right, then why bother calling a boycott instead of using the more effective and to-the-point protest strategy of letter/fax writing? A boycott with no economic teeth seems unlikely to achieve its stated goal of changing Nepali government policy through "direct action". What a lot of good intention wasted.

Ethical Traveler suggests that regardless of its economic effects, the larger purpose of the boycott is to keep the issue alive in the international media. Activists truly concerned about the shared future of Nepalis and Tibetans would do better to consider the Tibetan issue within the larger context of human rights abuses plaguing His Majesty's Government of Nepal. As one long-time

Western resident in Kathmandu put it, "The recent deportation of Tibetans is only one symptom of the much broader problem of human rights abuses in Nepal."

Singling out the Tibetan issue as the human rights issue in Nepal that is most worthy of international concern makes a painful mockery of the suffering experienced during the seven years of Maoist-state conflict by thousands of rural Nepalis, people who have rarely made an international headline or been the lucky beneficiaries of tourist-activism. It also sends the unfortunate message to HMG that while Tibetans are worthy of more careful treatment, their own Nepali citizens are not.

For this reason, the proposed boycott will spark new tensions between the Nepali and Tibetan communities. Most Nepalis, particularly those who suffer at the hands of their own corrupt and ineffective government, are intuitively sympathetic to the Tibetan plight, though some have asked why

there is not a similar boycott of Bhutan for its treatment of ethnic Nepali refugees. Unfortunately, a boycott of Nepali tourism called in the name of Tibetan refugees has the potential to draw stark lines between the two communities, hindering rather than helping mutual understanding.

Instead of alienating the Nepali public by boycotting travel to the country, the international community (tourist and otherwise) should engage with individual Nepalis and the Nepali media to raise the profile of the issue right here in Nepal. Nepalis will hopefully come to see the Tibetan situation as a feature of their own serious human rights problem, and begin to pressure their own government, police, and armed forces to adopt responsible human rights practices across the board.

Concerned foreigners should use their collective influence to join Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch in a fax writing campaign to Nepali embassies, government offices and the media. The high profile of the Tibetan deportation should be used as a platform from which to protest the dismal human rights record characterised by illegal detentions, disappearances, torture and extrajudicial killings which are being documented across Nepal.

Ethical judgements are never easily made, particularly regarding a situation as complex as contemporary Himalayan geopolitics. Truly ethical travellers should take a closer look at the facts for themselves and consider boycotting the boycott. Better still, the morality experts at Ethical Traveler might call it off before the damage is done, and save everyone a lot of trouble. ♦

(Sara Shneiderman is conducting anthropological research in Nepal and Tibet for a PhD at Cornell University in the United States. Mark Turin is Director of the Digital Himalaya Project based at the Department of Social Anthropology at Cambridge University, UK.)

## Strangers in a Strange Land

Excerpts from piece by Jeff Greenwald in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, 5 June.

### San Francisco Chronicle

'Landlocked Nepal is in a delicate position with China, its powerful neighbour to the north. Nonetheless, its action violates a central principle of international refugee law. Established by international treaty following the deadly repatriations committed during World War II, the principle—"non-refoulement" (ie "non return")—obliges nations not to send refugees back to a place where their lives or freedom will be threatened. Nepal has ignored this convention, and its assertions to the contrary are not persuasive.

What can we do? The Berkeley-based Tibet Justice Center ([www.tibetjustice.org](http://www.tibetjustice.org)), along with Ethical Traveler, offer a suggestion: One of our most persuasive diplomatic weapons as individuals, though we rarely exploit it, is our ability to withhold our tourism dollars from oppressive regimes. A popular boycott of travel to Nepal will send a strong message to the kingdom's officials, who draw huge profits from climbing expedition and visa fees. This boycott must be maintained until Nepal issues an apology to the Tibetan community, and an assurance that such a shameful lapse in human decency will not occur again.

It is ironic that this boycott should take place now, 50 years after runners carried word of Norgay and Hillary's monumental achievement from Everest Base Camp to Kathmandu. But the fate of 18 innocent refugees cannot be eclipsed by pomp and ceremony. It is crucial that we honour human virtue and courage in the best way possible—by compelling Nepal's authorities to answer for their actions.'

(Jeff Greenwald, the Oakland-based author of five travel books, is executive director of Ethical Traveler.)

that the essence of learning can be captured in just one or two books is a folly only found in Nepal. Why put a cap on knowledge?

3. *School fee ceiling.* The government gets its share of tax from private schools, and can plough this money into bringing up the standard of other schools. If the schools are run as trusts, why raise this issue?

4. *Full scholarships for 25 percent of students from underprivileged families.* How can this be done if there is a ceiling on fees? Ideally, children who can't afford good education will be subsidised by parents who can.

5. *Transparent accounts must be shared with parents.* This demand does not have to be articulated for schools that are under the trust law, and schools under the company act are not obliged to share their transactions and are protected by company law. Parents can evaluate quality and determine whether the education is

worth it.

6. *Investigation team from Pabson, parents and student unions will inspect schools.* The School Supervisor from the District Education Office is supposed to do these inspections and hardly makes any visits. This is the job of the DEO, not some ad hoc political group.

7. *Limit student numbers per class.*

What is the magic number? Do people making these demands know the correlation between numbers and structure of schools?

8. *Extra curricular activities every Friday.*

Why every Friday, why not every Wednesday? How long, and what kind of activities? Who will pay?

9. *Children of martyrs and victims of war educated free of cost.* How many? From where?

These demands show it is not about educational reforms, but about politics, pure and simple. Political parties brought this

country to ruin, and the Maoists have made orphans of many children. Private schools have been hounded for doing the government's job. Now they have to come to the rescue, and that too under the barrel of a gun.

*Sarad Rai, Satdobato*

#### SNAKE, SCORPION, FROG

Alok Bohara's letter (#148) speaks of "the current political stalemate" for which an analogy may be found in a popular Nepali belief about placing a snake, scorpion and frog together. According to folklore, none would be able to make a move: the snake, terrified of the scorpion's sting, would be prevented from going after the frog. The scorpion, in turn, would not be able to attack the snake for fear of being eaten by the frog, which would not dare bat an eyelid petrified by the snake.

*Name withheld, email*

#### BIRTHDAY WISH

What a shock to read that a 200-member 'high level committee' has been formed to celebrate King Gyanendra's auspicious birthday for three days. I urge the king through this letter to please ask this high level committee to stop the extravaganza. The kingdom is in crisis now with the western half of the country paralysed by a transport strike, a threatened closure of all schools, and the peace process in serious jeopardy. The king should call a moratorium on all celebrations till peace has been secured, and the peoples' hope for the future is restored. Nepal should be in mourning right now, and even when we turn the corner to better days, the kind of money and energy wasted on celebrations should be spent on reconstruction, rehabilitation and development with the monarch taking the lead.

*Deepa Singh, Maharajanj*

#### NEPALI TIMES

Let me thank you for giving us expatriate Nepalis a chance to read your columns and analyses free of cost on the internet. The content gives us an in-depth understanding of what is happening back in Nepal at such a critical period in our history. Special thanks to Kunda Dixit for his biting satire on the shenanigans of our rulers in 'Under My Hat'. Thank you for doing such a good job and keeping our spirits up.

*Rohit Gurung, London*

#### BIRTHDAY WISH

What a shock to read that a 200-member 'high level committee' has been formed to celebrate King Gyanendra's auspicious birthday for three days. I urge the king through this letter to please ask this high level committee to stop the extravaganza. The country is in crisis right now with the western half of the country paralysed by a transport strike, a threatened closure of all schools,

and the peace process in serious jeopardy. What if the king said, "Celebrate my birthday with pomp only when long-term peace has been secured in the country, and the people have hope for the future." Nepal should be in mourning right now, and even when we turn the corner to better days, the kind of money and energy wasted on celebrations should be spent on reconstruction, rehabilitation and development with the monarch taking the lead.

*Deepa Singh, Maharajanj*

#### CORRECTIONS

- In 'Give us our daily bread' (#149) the name of the proprietor of Pumpernickel Bakery should have been Norbu Shrestha.
- Both photographs accompanying 'Thapadom' (#149) were taken by Nhuchhe Man Dongol.
- 'Being seen' (#149) was written by Wayne Amtzis.

# Kotbara still weeps

⇨ from p1

Kotbara village is four hours from Manma, and is still the frontline in the Maoist war. More than a year after the massacre there of 35 people in an army raid, the villagers still appear shell-shocked (See *Nepali Times*, #106). Of the dead, 17 were young men from a single village in Dhading and seven others—all construction workers at Kotbara airfield. Eleven locals were also killed.

Kotbara residents are still afraid to talk, and it is still not easy to piece together what happened here in the morning of 24 February 2002. It was three days after the Mangalsen and Sanfebagar attacks where the Maoists killed 137 soldiers and policemen. The army launched a helicopter-borne counter-offensive northwards.

A woman Maoist fired her rifle at a helicopter as it approached Kotbara. The soldiers arrived soon after. They shot dead a villager who was walking to his house and wounded a health assistant. The army's intelligence about Maoist presence in Kotbara was accurate, but the militia were hiding at the other end of the town. The wounded health worker warned the Maoists that the army had come, and they escaped into the

forests.

One eye-witness said some workers were sitting outside the house playing bag chal, all were reportedly lined up and shot. Among the dead was the sub-contractor, Kumar Thapa whose brother, by coincidence, was in the army's attack unit. A local woman took him to the bodies, and he recognised his brother among the dead. He paid villagers Rs 300 to bury him along the retaining wall of the runway that his own workers had built. "I think it was because he saw his brother that the rest of us were saved," said Man Bahadur Bista, a local colleague of the dead workers.

Other workers were buried along the perimeter of the airport, and local Maoists prevent us from taking pictures of the village and the airport. The villagers told us the army came back the next day, exhumed the bodies, put some guns next to them and took pictures. They then ordered the bodies to be reburied. Afterwards, the Maoists came and ordered the bodies to be exhumed again. One Maoist militiaman later admits to us that his group took the bodies out, draped them in red flags and also took pictures.

The villager who told us this shook her head, and said: "Men who never carried weapons were made to do so after they died. Men who were never in politics were covered in flags after death. Neither the army or the Maoists thought it was necessary to treat the bodies with dignity, tell the relatives of the dead what happened, or take care of their widows and orphans."

The airfield at Kotbara was

nearly finished when the incident took place, but no one has dared to go back to complete the job. A technical team was there last month, but hasn't made a report yet.

The army is digging the road linking Kalikot to Dailekh, and once it is completed, it will make things easier here in these blood-soaked hills that everyone has forsaken. That is, if the peace holds. ♦

Clockwise from top:  
Kotbara airfield under construction, two years ago.

The house in Kotbara outside where the workers were reportedly lined up and shot by soldiers last February.

The Maoists destroyed the new bridge two years ago and had built this temporary one, now the river has washed away even this bridge, cutting off 12 villages on the other side.

The Nepal Telecommunication Corporation's phone centre in Jumla which was gutted in the Maoist attack last year and never rebuilt.

Village women near Jumla plant paddy in their terrace fields, some signs of normalcy after the ceasefire.



ALL PICS: MOHAN MANALI

HERE AND THERE

by DANIEL LAK

## Weapons of Mass Deception



It's now clear that the pretext for the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq was a sham. That Saddam Hussein—admittedly one of the nastiest fellows on the planet—had Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) primed and ready to blow away Western civilisation was widely proclaimed by the leadership in both Britain and the United States. We heard of nuclear missiles, an array of diseases more deadly than SARS and nerve agents that could decimate a modern city in a matter of seconds. All in freezers and bunkers in Saddam's Iraq.

These quite simply do not exist, whatever President Bush or Prime Minister Blair may still say. The British Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, made a welcome admission in a recent BBC interview. In a moment of rare candour from a Western leader, he allowed that such was the level of scepticism around the world, few people would believe that the Americans or the British hadn't planted any weapons they may find in the coming weeks and months. I for one doubt that they would do that, but you never know.

Anyway, it's also tempting to conclude that the whole emphasis by the Anglo-American alliance on non-proliferation and WMDs—as nuclear, chemical and biological weapons are known—is misleading and capricious. WMDs are indeed scary things. The only country ever to use a nuclear device, the United States, knows this only too well. So do the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the hundreds of thousands of civilians who were vapourised so further American casualties could be avoided in forcing the surrender of Japan in 1945. As for chemical weapons, let us ask the British about them. They are the last Western power to use them—against Iraq in 1918 and 1919 to put down a troublesome tribal uprising in a once and future colony. Saddam famously used poison gas against Kurds and Iranians in the 1980s and for that he is to be vilified. Never mind that at the time, he was backed by the same Anglo-American axis that recently



dethroned him.

Britain and the United States, it seems to me, make such a fuss about WMDs for a variety of reasons, and concern for the world's safety is not first among them. The two countries together dominate the world market in conventional arms and military equipment, and they aim to keep it that way. A recent BBC documentary even pondered whether or not British governments were addicted to arms sales, like a drunkard to the bottle. It's not much of a leap to say that America too finds military spending to be a panacea for many social challenges, and that in itself is a form of addiction. A country that is steadily dismantling policies that overtly redistribute wealth and directly create jobs, uses a bloated and obscene defence budget to prime the economic pump, and to provide work for the poor. And exports are increasingly important.

As for mass destruction, what does the most harm—a putative nuclear

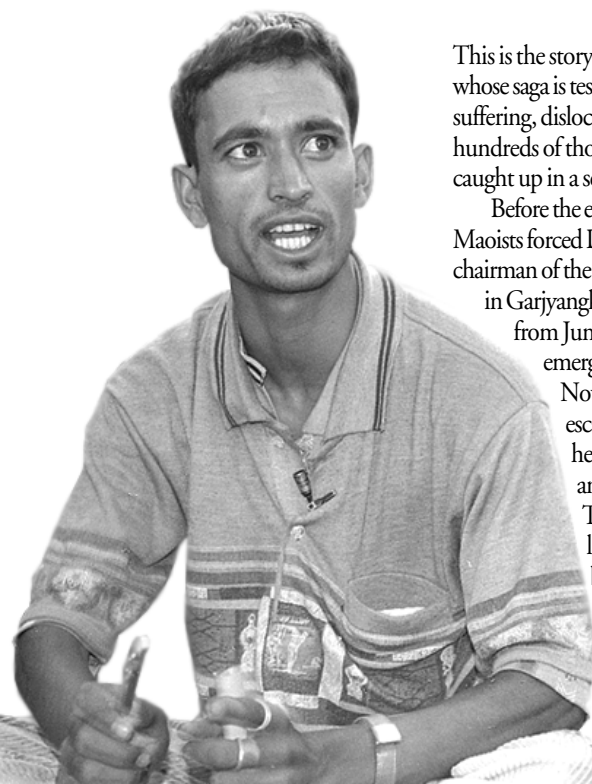
**Britain and the United States dominate the world market in conventional arms and military equipment, and they aim to keep it that way.**

bomb or the millions of land mines produced and legally sold around the world by firms from Italy, Bulgaria and even the United States? Sarin gas, as horrible as it is, threatens far fewer people than the submachine guns and pistols produced in vast and profitable quantities by Colt, Hechler and Koch and the good people of the Kalashnikov empire in Russia. Anthrax wreaked havoc in America in the aftermath of the 9-11 attacks. Less than a dozen people died—each a tragedy and an outrage—yet in the same period of weeks, some 800 Americans were killed or wounded by firearms. And as that was going on, countless anonymous Africans died in conflicts fuelled by small arms and material sales, largely from Western companies. No mass destruction this, just business as usual for British Aerospace, Armscor of South Africa, Israel's Uzi company and FN of Belgium.

Anti-arms campaigners, who are the most tireless and globalised of international protesters, say the American and British governments in particular, but many other Western governments besides, have become little more than extensions of their arms industries. Hundreds and thousands of domestic jobs and, crucially, votes depend on military exports to the world's poor countries, where conflicts rage unabated. At the same time, Western taxpayers fund development strategies based on conflict resolution and peacemaking. A plane flies in from the West with a cargo of weapons. Upstairs in Business Class sit well compensated conflict resolution and human rights specialists ready to dispense advice.

How about a new concept: Weapons of Mass Deception?

# Two funerals for Danraj



This is the story of Danraj Khatri, whose saga is testimony to the suffering, dislocation and misery of the hundreds of thousands of Nepalis caught up in a senseless conflict.

Before the emergency last year, the Maoists forced Danraj to be the ward chairman of the 'people's government' in Garjyangkot, a three-hour walk from Jumla. When the

emergency was declared in November 2001, Danraj escaped to the district headquarters in Jumla and turned himself in.

The army promptly locked him up for being a Maoist.

"I was beaten repeatedly, and would have died if it wasn't for the help from my cellmates,"

Danraj recalls. Even though he survived 41 days of torture, rumours spread in the town outside that the army had killed Danraj Khatri by pushing him out of a flying helicopter. Danraj's father performed the last rites for his son in Garjyangkot, and later the army forced him to write a letter home to say he was alive.

After being freed, Danraj went back to his village only to be accused by the Maoists of being an informant. A group of them surrounded his house one night, took him outside and shot him with a revolver. The bullet only grazed his face, and he managed to escape three pipe bomb explosions. The Maoists then went on a rampage, beating up and badly injuring 11 villagers.

Danraj vomited blood and it took all night to drag himself to Jumla. His father, convinced once more that his

son was dead, made preparations for a second funeral for his son.

With the ceasefire, Danraj's adventures have been less dramatic. But every day, there are reminders of those days of fear and dread. Later in Jumla, Danraj ran into Prem Buda, the Maoist who shot and tried to kill him last year. "I was angry when I saw him, but then I found out he too was on the run from the Maoists." Buda is now with the police and has been posted in Rolpa.

Last month, thinking it safe, Danraj went back to his home in Garjyangkot to be with his wife. But the Maoists came and told him he couldn't come there if he lived in Jumla. "I looked at my house one last time, said goodbye to my wife, and returned to Jumla, weeping."

(Mohan Mainali in Jumla)

## DOMESTIC BRIEFS

### Rights groups angry at refugee categories

International human rights organisations have reacted sharply to the results of the categorisation of Bhutani refugees by a Nepal-Bhutan team announced Wednesday. In a joint statement, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Lutheran World Federation, Refugees International, the US Committee for Refugees, and the Bhutanese Refugee Support Group said the decision could render stateless tens of thousands of refugees. Said Rachael Reilly of Human Rights Watch: "This is not a solution, but rather a wholesale violation of their rights."

The results of the categorisation of 12,000 Bhutani refugees from Khudunabari were expected. Bhutani refugee leaders have had no illusions about a process that they say was fatally flawed.

More than 70 percent of the refugees interviewed were categorised as Bhutani who had "voluntarily emigrated". Less than three percent were declared "genuine Bhutanese", and a similar number fell under the "criminal" category. Around 3,000 refugees were found to be "non-Bhutanese".

The refugees left Bhutan 13 years ago, fleeing what they say was persecution by Thimphu and some 100,000 of them have been living in refugee camps in Nepal. In 1996, then home minister Sher Bahadur Deuba gave in to a Bhutani proposal to categorise refugees into four groups and a joint-verification team began work in Khudunabari in 2000.

Many refugees were forced to fill out forms saying they were leaving willingly when they were driven out of Bhutan in 1990-91.

Thimphu used the same documents to prove that more than 8,500 of the first batch of refugees left voluntarily. Thimphu had hinted last month that some of the Bhutani could apply for citizenship. "Since the possibility of hostility in Bhutan is still very high, the refugees will definitely opt to stay back in Nepal," Rakesh Chhetri, a Bhutani refugee leader told us.

### Trafficking unchanged

In a hard-hitting report, the US State Department has charged Nepal with not complying fully with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. "Nepal is a source country of women and girls trafficked primarily to India for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and debt bondage." It says Nepali women in the Middle East have worked in "slave-like conditions" in the past. Internal trafficking from rural areas to cities is on the rise, and poor families place children into debt bondage. The report, however, credits Nepal for making significant efforts to combat the scourge despite resource constraints.

### Rosie's run

British adventurer Rosie Swale raised Rs 300,000 from her speed trek from Hilsa in west Nepal to Pashupatinagar in the east. She collected Rs 100 from sponsors for every hundred of an estimated total of 2.5 million steps she took during the tour. It took her 79 days to complete the feat. Proceeds will be used for the renovation of Humla's only hospital that presently serves 50,000 people with only one doctor and no laboratory. Swale plans to produce a film on her her trek to collect more funds for the hospital renovation project. "During my trek I came face to face with the stunning natural beauty and the dire poverty of this country," she said in a press meet organised jointly by Nepal Trust and Nepal Tourism Board in Kathmandu on her return. She believes that her film can establish Nepal as a safe destination among Western tourists. Three guides, a medical staff, 10 porters and three supporting staff accompanied the 57-year-old grandmother.

# Maimed by mines

## KUNDA DIXIT

It has been a little over a year since Bhagwati Gautam of Shoba village in Rukum stepped on an army landmine. After five months in hospital, she walks with a crutch and has turned into an anti-landmine activist. "I was lucky, I only lost my right leg, most others lost their lives," says Bhagwati who was in Kathmandu last week to join delegates from the International Campaign to Ban Landmines as they met government officials, the army, police and Maoist leaders.

Accompanying Bhagwati is Hari Jang Shah, who is also from Shoba village and was injured with four others in a Maoist booby trap four years ago. Both Bhagwati and Hari have got over the initial trauma of their injuries, but are hurt by official apathy to victims like themselves.

Despite the ceasefire, the danger of landmines and unexploded ordnance will continue to be a threat to the lives and limbs of thousands of Nepalis. The Royal Nepali Army admits it has laid approximately 10,000 anti-personnel mines on the perimeter of its bases all over Nepal to defend them from Maoist attacks. But, ironically, most soldiers killed or wounded so far have stepped on the army's own mines. Many others were injured in landmine explosions set off by Maoists on highways, and are still undergoing rehabilitation at the military hospital in Chhauni.

The Maoists use command-detonated improvised explosive devices (IEDs) made from pipes and pressure cookers which are allowed by international anti-landmine laws, but unexploded bombs litter the countryside. The first step to removing this danger should be for both sides to provide maps of where the devices are located.

According to official tallies, 202 people were killed by landmines and other explosives and more than 500 were injured last year alone. Of the dead, 52 were women, children and non-combatants, and half the total number injured were civilians. Although the number of landmine deaths have dropped dramatically in the six months after the ceasefire, people are still being killed and maimed. In the past week, landmines have killed a woman in Pyuthan and two farmers were wounded in Dhanusha and Salyan. Last month, a soldier who had survived a helicopter crash at the telecom tower in Mahadevanda was killed when he stepped on an army mine at the accident site.

"The difference between landmines and other weapons is that they are indiscriminate, and they remain long after the conflict is over," explains Purna Shoba Chitrakar, coordinator of the Nepal Campaign to Ban Landmines. "The threat in Nepal is not as severe as in Afghanistan or Cambodia, but 702 deaths in a year is huge by Nepali standards."

The Nepal Campaign is trying to get the government to agree to



**Landmine victims need help to stand on their own feet. Bhagwati Gautam last year (top, left) as landmine victim, and today as an anti-landmine activist.**

sign the 1997 Ottawa Convention that bans use, storage and transportation of landmines, and the Maoists to commit not to use anti-personnel mines under Geneva Call, the organisation that monitors land mine use by non-state groups.

More immediately, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines wants an inclusion of a clause on prohibiting the use of landmines in the Code of Conduct between the government and the Maoists. "The ceasefire is an opportunity to address the situation on the ground immediately as a part of the peace process," Miriam Coronel Ferrer of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines told us.

Victims of landmines like Bhagwati are not hopeful that Kathmandu is going to sign the Ottawa Treaty anytime soon, for now they need help to meet medical bills and rehabilitation for other victims like themselves. The government has helped pay for the treatment of civilians wounded in the emergency, but there is a big backlog of reimbursement to Bheri Zonal Hospital in Nepalganj and the Teaching Hospital in Kathmandu.

Says Bhagwati: "All we are saying is, help us stand on our own feet." ♦

(Ban Landmines Campaign Nepal ncbl@mail.com.np)

**af** WELCOMES YOU IN ITS NEW FRENCH LANGUAGE SESSION

**ADMISSION OPEN**

1<sup>st</sup> July to 10<sup>th</sup> September 2003

**Courses**  
Regular, Crash, Oral, French Civilization & Conversation

**Come and register** **Contact**

From 18<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2003 from 9 am to 6 pm

**Alliance Française**  
Thapathali (opposite Rotary Club) Tel: 4241 163, 4242 832

**COMPUTER LAB ON RENT**

Fully furnished and air-conditioned computer laboratory with 20 networked P4 PC (expandable to 40 units) including spacious meeting area and support staff at a modern building with large parking facility available for full or partial rent on hourly, daily or weekly basis. Customized IT courses can also be arranged on request. Please mail requirement to [itlabrent@hotmail.com](mailto:itlabrent@hotmail.com) for quick quote or call 4243156 and ask for Mrs. Khadka.

**FM 104.8**

**ANAND**

**TRIPURESHWAR**  
Tel: 4242389, 4241760

- Curtain Fabric, Tapestry/Upholstery Fabric
- Carpets/PVC Tiles, Parquet
- Furniture wooden, steel
- Blinds- Horizontal & Vertical
- Curtain Rails
- Mattress, Pillow, Bolster, Cushion
- Doormats, Bathmats
- Wall Papers, Wall-scenery, Wall-Carpets
- Blankets, Shower Curtains, Bed Covers, Bed Sheets, Towels
- Aluminium-Classe/Windom/Ceiling
- Artificial Flowers/Flower Pots
- Slippers, Dining mats, Dressing mats
- Washing- Carpets/Sofas/Curtains

And Entire Decorating Range

Please, visit **ANAND** for your interior design work. We have professional designers for you

**PANIPOKHARI**  
Tel: 4428414, 4427806  
Fax: 977-1-4428122  
e-mail: [mangalam@link.com.np](mailto:mangalam@link.com.np)

**Mandala House**  
APARTMENT HOTEL

Luxury Apartments at Comfortable Rates

Baluwatar, Kathmandu  
Tel: 412412, 428019 (9:00 am - 6:00 pm)  
9810-3532 (after 6:00 pm & Saturdays)  
E-mail: [mandala@wink.com.np](mailto:mandala@wink.com.np)  
Web site: [www.mandala.com.np](http://www.mandala.com.np)

**EASY TIMES**

It's never been easier to subscribe to Nepali Times

Just dial this number and leave your address.

**5543333**

Thanks to our 10000 customers

You have proved that we have done the best to you

Summer discount up to **20%** available on Internet accounts for a limited period

For more details

**WORLDLINK**  
Jawalakhel, Lalitpur, Phone: 5523050

**Nationwide offices:**

Pokhara: 061-528412, 522668	Janakpur - 041 - 521087
Narayanghat: 056-524437	Birgunj: 051-523381
Birwal: 071-540805	Bhadrapur: 023-520343
Bhairahawa - 071 - 521387	Nepalgunj: 081-520619
Biratnagar: 021-522634, 530020	



# The Road to Mandale

Don't let the ugliness blind you to the elegance of the moment.

The rancour within the Rastriya Prajatantra Party over Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa's first cabinet appointments reflects the ex-panchas' rapacity. Don't let the ugliness blind you to the elegance of the moment: Deepak Bohara lectures the premier on the principles governing party-government relations, Niranjan Thapa expounds the constitutional and political prerogatives that come with the restoration of the prime minister's executive authority, Kamal Thapa sings paeans to press freedom. These men come from a tribe reared in an unadulterated Panchayat ambience. Unlike first-generation panchas, mainly party leaders and functionaries who were coerced or enticed into the palace-led polity, they were free to choose right from their student days. The conventional wisdom that the Rastrabadi Swatantra Bidyarthi Mandal was a throng of thugs obscures much of the picture. No amount of state sponsorship could have created a formidable band unless the members had some shared values.

Like most of their contemporaries, these students could have become kangresi and communist supporters. Why did they choose to tell on them? Monopolising the patron-client relationship that reinforced the Panchayat superstructure must have been a major motive, but not the only one. Maybe they genuinely believed that if King Mahendra hadn't stepped in first with his partyless platform in the profoundly polarised international



CHANDRA MAN MAHARJAN

and regional climate, one of the key kangresis would have had to become our own Kenneth Kaunda peddling a one-party program.

Few mandales must have been aware of the exigency of the external environment when they converged on Tribhuvan International Airport on 30 December, 1976 to wave black flags at BP Koirala and Ganesh Man Singh and mock their national-reconciliation plea. The influence was instructive. If Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's state of emergency hadn't hardened South Asia's political

discourse in 1975, the second amendment to the Panchayat constitution later that year might have embraced a wider constellation of kangresis.

The student movement that culminated in the referendum prompted an official ban on mandales. (Politicians who outlaw their ilk to make way for rivals are either paranoid to the core or congenial conspirators.) In their search for space, the mandales made a smart choice. They infiltrated the flocks of kangresis and communists flexing their muscles on college

campuses across the kingdom.

Some of these toughies would probably have become ardent multiparty enthusiasts way back in 1980 if the Janata Party was still in power across the southern border when our referendum was held. Indira Gandhi, who stormed back to office five months before Nepalis voted, was a known votary of direct engagement with the palace. The outcome was preordained. In retrospect, the panchas had greater reason to thank Indian voters for another decade of dominance.

Throughout the 1980s, the pejorative "mandale" stuck with the well-built boys of the National Sports Council. The pioneers took part in the two adult-franchise elections and a few became ministers as elected or nominated legislators. Some also headed the leading sports associations that collectively constituted a parallel government. The mandal's founder president, Padam Thakurathi, represented the liberal strain as a newspaper editor. He nearly lost his life for his exposures on an underground fraternity many of us thought he was

part of. In the end, the tribe could adjust to the restoration of multiparty politics so comfortably because they were perpetually prepared.

The malleability of ex-mandales is perhaps rooted in the reality that they didn't have to spend time in prison for their political convictions—although some did for their personal misconduct. Unfamiliar with the bitterness that incarceration, exile and ostracism breed, they can speak of consensus with greater ease.

If Presidents Vladimir Putin of Russia and Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland can leave behind their totalitarian communist baggage, don't our right-wing autocrats deserve a chance to reinvent themselves?

The post-October Fourth period provided an opportunity. We don't know whether the RPP's non-confrontation campaign was responsible for Lokendra Bahadur Chand's resignation, as its leaders claim. The party did become the principle beneficiary.

Maybe the leaders resolved to stay away from the street's raucous discussions on post-monarchy democracy because they visualised Afghanistan and Iran, while the agitators saw images of France and Germany.

To be sure, it will be difficult for the RPP to cast off the M-word. The party should quit trying, because it no longer is the slur it used to be. The word has acquired a generic connotation embodying all those scandalous attributes everybody sees in everybody else today. Time is a great equaliser. ♦

## WEEKEND PACKAGE

escape   
TO godavari



Laze around in the lush green gardens or go for a stimulating walk in the surrounding hills. Work out at the Fitness Centre or play an energetic game of tennis. Enjoy a rejuvenating sauna or a soothing massage.

The Godavari Weekend Package is your ideal holiday package. Guest can also avail the Package any day of the week.



### Package Includes:

- ~ Room, Breakfast & Dinner
- ~ 25% discount on Food and 15% discount on Beverages
- ~ Fruits, Flowers & Cookies in the room
- ~ Complimentary use of Swimming Pool, Fitness Centre, Sauna, Tennis, Skittle Alley
- ~ All taxes

Please call 5560675 for more information.

**Godavari**   
Village Resort  
Kathmandu • Nepal

P.O.Box: 12446, "Amarabati", Toukhel, Godavari, Lalitpur, Nepal. Tel: 5560675, 5560775.  
Fax: 977-1-5560777. E-mail: godavari@godavari.wlink.com.np ~ Website: www.godavariresort.com.np

## A SOCIAL APPROACH



Hospice Nepal is a center that takes care of terminally ill cancer patients with love and compassion. It is a non-profit organization that runs with the help of volunteers and contributions from various donors. TNT Nepal has been one of the answers for this desperate need to give relief from pain. TNT Nepal has decided to support this noble mission with your generous act. We have already contributed a generous amount since the year 2000.

With our policy of "penny and penny laid up will be many", TNT believes that it can further help Hospice Nepal without much burden to any specific party. Our valuable clients, at the same time, can be proud of the fact that whenever they use the services of TNT, they are actually participating for the greater social cause. So, TNT has promised to donate NRs. 5 from each courier sent out by TNT International Express, from Jan 1st 2003.

Adding life to days  
Not days to life

TNT International Express  
Teenkune, Kathmandu  
Ph.No. 4474594, 4243237

## Career in TV

Looking for a career in television? Sara Sarans & Vijay, producers of the popular *Dishanirdesh* and other television programmes, is looking for a highly-motivated female candidate to work as anchor/producer.

You should be a university graduate, fluent in English and Nepali, aged 20-30, have the drive and passion for current affairs and broadcasting. Successful candidate will be offered an attractive salary package and career prospects. Apply within ten days with a recent passport photograph.



4th Floor  
Heritage Plaza I  
Kamaladi, Kathmandu  
sara@mos.com.np

This **JUNE** at the



*A Speciality Restaurant*

**Abhaya and the STEAM INJUNS**

50% DISCOUNT on all food and beverages

**SHANGRI-LA**  
KATHMANDU  
Kathmandu's Finest Boutique Hotel  
Tel: 441-2999

BIZ NEWS

**Kia ramro**

Comfort, power and safety: the three-in-one package is what driving the Sorento is all about, according to Korea's KIA Motors. Add to that the relative affordability compared to Japanese cars in the same class and you have a winner. With its well-appointed interiors, a superbly crafted engine that serves up 140ps of thrust at 3,800rpm, power tilt steering and spaciousness is already winning accolades. Its sturdy body-on-frame design comes loaded with standard safety features that makes driving in Nepali highways worry free. For test drives: Kia Plaza, Continental Trading Enterprises at Tinkune.



**Benetton style**

Just arrived: the Summer 2003 collection from the United Colours of Benetton. Valley residents can pick up entire ensembles of trendy, informal basics from their store at Darbar Marg, and other outlets in the country. Built around distinct themes, the collection is adaptable to personal tastes. Summer fabrics include lightweight cottons, linen, voile, crushed poplin, tencel, jersey lycra. Prices range from Rs 279 to Rs 3,499.

**Mad about Mazda**

Two brand new models from Mazda will start turning heads on our streets and highways. Mazda 6 and New Mazda B-series pick up were launched at a ceremony last week. The Mazda 6 has four cylinders, 16 valves and is 1,988cc. It has five speeds and costs a cool Rs 2.8 million. "That's a reasonable price to ask for a midsize sedan car that features the latest technology and has won the car of the year award," says Rohini Thapaliya of Padma Shree Limited, the Kathmandu-based distributor. The Mazda B series is a five-speed 2,499cc pick up that can easily seat five. Price: upwards from Rs 2 million.



**Shine on**

Winston Churchill may have received brilliant ideas while polishing his shoes but in today's busy world who has the time for a spit-and-rub? Now, all you need to do is tuck your shoes into Silroad's automatic shoe polisher machine and after a minute they come out shiny like a new paisa. According to the local distributor, Akhil, Silroads's is ideal for hotels, hospitals, corporate houses and even private homes.

**More noodles**

The Chaudhary Group has introduced yet another noodle, named 'Soaltee', priced at only Rs 10 for two 50g packets that include seasoning. Soaltee made its debut with an International Music Festival held at the Dashrath Stadium in late May.

**Chim-chimney**

Tired of choking in the kitchen? Install an Elica electric chimney and smoke the trouble out. Available in different sizes, the chimneys are manufactured by the Italian company Elica SPA Akhil and are ideally suited to the urban Nepali kitchen. Elica offers many different models of their strong, durable and virtually noiseless chimneys. The authorised dealer for the nation is Akhil Trading Concern.

STRICTLY BUSINESS

by ASHUTOSH TIWARI



**A better buy**  
The art of selling.

A few years ago, a survey found that tourists expressed interest in visiting Nepal again. They wanted to come back not because of the mountains, the temples or the weather but because of the people they met. Visitors, especially those who had also been to neighbouring countries, talked about being impressed with Nepalis who they described as "friendly", "helpful" and "sincere".

The survey recommended that if the tourism officials needed a face to promote the industry, Nepali people could serve as excellent brand ambassadors to attract tourists to Nepal. But alas! The media campaign that came out soon after was a disaster. It glossed over Nepal, failing to communicate a single compelling theme as to why anyone should visit Nepal.

A similar story can be found in the Nepali handicraft sector too. For some years, handicraft artisans, producers, and retailers have had their own trade association, complete with a building and the inevitable organisational politics. But ask any of them what makes their products unique, what buyers see when they think of Nepali handicrafts or how the producers keep pace with contemporary designs, and you'll get either vague answers or boringly detailed explanations.

It seems that other than doing the production and hoping that buyers will somehow come, the mavens of the handicraft industry—busy as they are mouthing clichés about poverty reduction and helping women entrepreneurs—rarely spend time articulating why anyone should want to buy more of their products.



MIN BAIRACHARYA

And you can tease out more such stories when you scan industries for carpets, garments, tea, herbs, Nepali movies and even that of Chinese motorcycle dealers. The business people associated with these industries do not seem to understand that buyers' awareness about the goods and services alone does not translate into more sales. That is because few are told the reasons as to why they should want to buy more.

In this light, the matrix that Nepali industries find themselves in is like this: first, an opportunity to make money is identified. A spurt of growth occurs in the initial phase. This is characterised by the rush of a number of players of varying quality, who, for a brief while, do rather well, attracting even more players to the industry. It culminates in the solemn formation of an all-Nepal association of the industry.

But things start going downhill after everyone gets together for the trade association. Suddenly, there emerges a collective inability to take the industry to a greater level of market sophistication. Growth slows, players

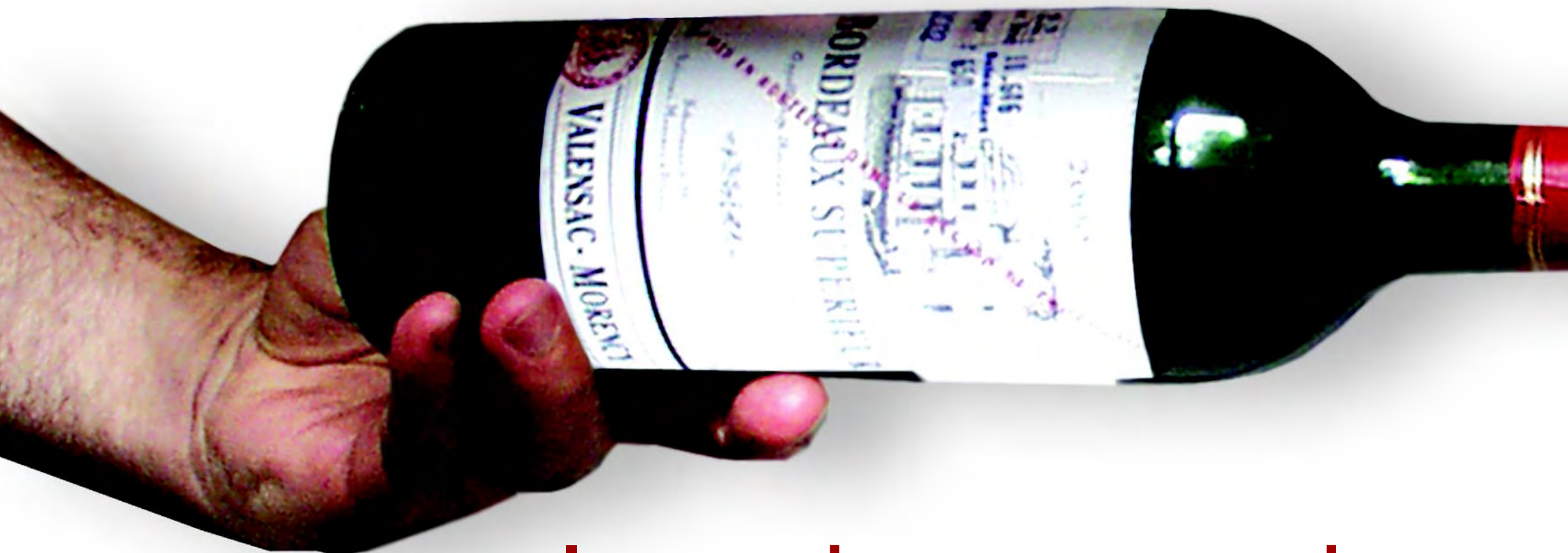
start to quarrel over market shares, personality clashes turn associations into personal fiefdoms, and the politicians are blamed. Once promising industries fail to live off their own earnings, they are doomed to stay inefficient cottage industries that constantly need donor money and government subsidy.

Is there a way out of this? One approach, already adopted by some in the pashmina industry, could be for associations to focus on understanding why anyone would or would not want to buy their industries' goods and services. Once that is established, then the associations could brand their products in ways that convey value to customers. For instance, a pashmina company advertisement says their product looks "great at any age". This branding exercise increases demand. The handicraft industry could adopt such an approach by communicating the finesse of century-old Newari craftsmanship. And for tourism, this might mean inviting tourists to be, well, guests of Nepalis in Nepal and then enjoy the mountains and more. ♦

It's not just soap, it's skincare!

Soft, silky & moisturised,  
Does your soap actually deliver this feeling?





# In vino veritas

With cheap imported wines, Nepalis are turning from *ela* to *vino*.

**BRUCE OWENS**

I find myself once again pressed into service as wine columnist for *Nepali Times*. Of course, this is a great honour, but as with all great honours, it carries with it a heavy burden of responsibility. Though the publication schedule of one column every three years might appear to lessen this burden, in fact it only exacerbates it. Some local journalistic competition on this topic would help, but it apparently does not yet exist.

The first bit of advice I must provide is to not pay too much attention to whatever advice I offer.

Newcomers to the world of wine often remind me of many in the mid-eighties who were just learning to use a computer, they seemed convinced that if they did something wrong, something terrible would happen. Now, of course, computers have been relegated to the same category of appliances as CD players and electric razors: just plug it in and go. But somehow, drinking wine is seen as fraught with threatening obstacles and potentially disgracing disasters.

The words "serious" and "wine" should not be found in the same sentence, with several obvious

exceptions, such as "Iraq is suffering a serious shortage of wine". If it becomes clear that someone is in fact "serious" about wine, I suggest serving them beer or not inviting them at all. The serious wine drinker is often the rotten cork of a dinner party.

I am encouraged by recent informal research that has led me

to the conclusion that many Nepalis apparently do not suffer from these sorts of inhibitions. A completely uncontrolled survey at a recent large tamasha revealed that 49.7 percent (statistical reliability of plus or minus 100 percent) of those attending chose unidentified red or white wine over the conspicuously imported scotch that was being proffered in sloshing trays of tumblers. So, if wine seriousness and appreciation are not local problems, what's the problem?

Apparently the market has responded to local wine appreciation (and lack of inhibition), and the choices now available far exceed the capacity of the casual researcher to fully assess the opportunities for success (and failure) that now abound.

There are numerous wines available in Kathmandu that are good to drink and (considering how far they must come, and how they must get here) are reasonably priced. I have had a great deal of success in the Rs 495-700 range. In Nepal, the most important date on the bottle is not the vintage, but the date of its importation, which is



ALL PICS: MIN BAIRACHARYA

indicated on the duty sticker. Unless it is clear that a bottle imported in 1997 has led a pampered life in air conditioned comfort, it is probably safe to assume that it has led a tortured existence fraught with heat, cork desiccation, fluorescent lighting (a plague on all living beings), and overall lack of respect.

Wine is a living thing. Though it is true grapes that undergo some stress in their growing can contribute desirable character to the finished product, the same is not true of stress endured once the product is finished. So, try to buy bottles imported this year or last.

Once you have checked the

duty sticker, you can go on to the second number, the vintage. The 2000 vintage of Bordeaux brings tears of gratitude to the eyes of the Bordelais. Even the cheap stuff can be good. One great red success in this category is Chateau des Sables, a so called "*cru bourgeois*". What it lacks in pedigree in makes up for in taste. I wish I could find this at Rs 495 in the States. Another red Bordeaux worthy of consideration is a simple "Bordeaux Superieur"



**Synchronicity X-Transa 2003**  
A Radisson Hotel Kathmandu Effort - for the Young and Young at Heart!  
**A MASSIVE DOSE OF CHILL + THRILL UNDER THE SUN**

Venue: Radisson Hotel Kathmandu  
Date: 21 June 2003  
Time: 5 p.m. onwards  
Tickets: Rs. 500 (Singles) only  
Dress Code: Florals / Bermudas  
Activities: Food Stalls, Live Drinks Sampling, Water Sprinklers, Outdoor Venue, Pyrotechnics Display, Hawaiian / Beach Theme

International Music Day

Coca-Cola, Dan-Quel BEER, SAMSUNG, Radisson  
Tel: 441 1818, 442 3888

**Wine facts**

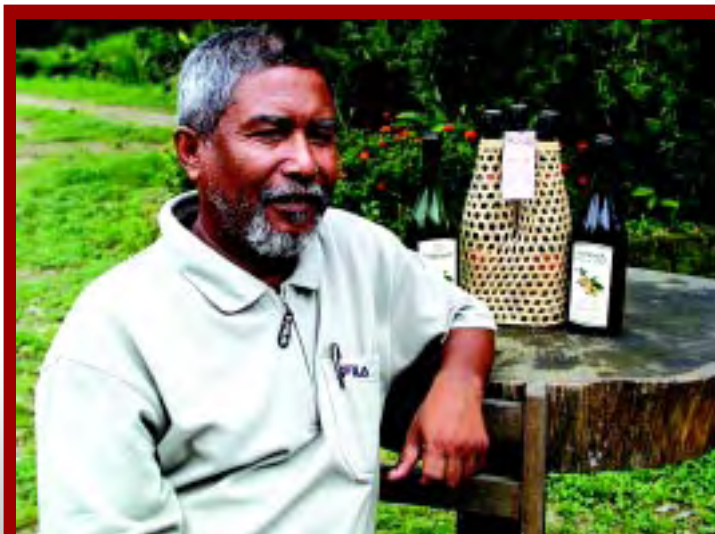
Nepal consumes some 14,000 bottles of imported wines a year, and this amount is growing rapidly as habits and social mores change.

One reason for the popularity of imported wines in Kathmandu is low prices. But how a good bottle of French wine is the same cost in Nepal as in France? Abishek Agarwal of Greenline Centre a leading wholesaler of liquor, says this is because exporters have a special price for South Asia, Nepal's import duty on wine is only 40 percent (compared to 200 percent in India), local taxes and department store margins are much lower here than elsewhere in Europe.

"The Nepali market for high grade wines is very small, most people look for cheaper wines, hence table wines and cooking wines are more popular among locals," says Abishek Agarwal.

Middle class Nepalis are also getting more health conscious and shifting from hard liquor to wines. What is good news for wine dealers is not so good news for the breweries: because wine is so cheap many people are also drinking less beer. "The wine business in Nepal is growing at 10 percent per year, and it is getting increasingly popular in urban areas where people are leaving the home-made brews for wines," says Pawan K Agarwal of PK Impex, the other big importer of foreign wines in Nepal.





# Made in Nepal

**HEMLATA RAI**

Twenty years ago, Satya Lal Ranjitkar petitioned King Birendra to promote indigenous wines to increase the income of rural people. The king was impressed and ordered sales tax and excise duty exemption for five years.

Later, the government reversed this decision and forced the industry to close down after labelling it illegal for not paying tax that they had been excused from. Nepal's wine industry has no chance when the government overturns royal edicts and lumps it in the same tax bracket as hard alcohol.

Still, it speaks for the perseverance of our wine makers that they have soldiered on with fine drinks professionally made from Himalayan wild berries and fruits.

"The wine industry has been victimised by those who manipulate public misconception about alcohol for their own benefit," says Maheshwor Lal Ranjitkar of Makalu Wine Industry (pic, left), maker of the famous Hinwa label. The wine is produced by fermenting fruits and contains only up to 17 percent alcohol.

Satya Lal's horticulturist son Madhusudan went to France to learn wine-making and returned with all the skills but they are lying fallow: the legal hassles, official discouragement, and limited consumers disheartened him. Madhusudan now runs a school.

Maheshwor Lal refuses to give up. When the government waived taxes for wine industries in 16 remote districts, he set up MWI in Sankhuwasabha a decade ago. Until the Maoists forced its closure in 2000, MWI was producing 40,000 bottles of wild mulberry wine per year.

But there may yet be a happy ending: the Maoists no longer object to the factory. Hinwa is still available at Kathmandu supermarkets, but it faces stiff competition from cheap imported grape wines.

"Our policies are such that it discourages Nepali wine industry in cost of increased dependency on imported wine," says Shishir Ranjitkar of Fermented Beverage Industry (FBI) which is planning to import its own wines. The roadmap is clear: put wine makers on a different tax bracket than distilleries and protect it with excise exemption like King Birendra did.

was excellent: the lightest of the reds we tasted, but interesting and rich in its own way. I purchased the Mexican El Meceador (from Baja California, the southern part of California that Mexico got to keep) out of curiosity and as a kind of joke. I had never heard of Mexican wine, much less seen or tasted it, and it seemed as unlikely as Nepali seafood. Wonder of wonders, this Mexican wine (Rs 625) was perhaps our favorite of all: rich, a bit fruity, easy to like, and, as one of the jury said, with "aspirations of greatness". I regret to add that we may have consumed the last (and only) bottle in the Valley.

The grand prize in the white category also came from the 2000 vintage of Bordeaux. This was a humble Chardonnay bottled by Leon Galhaud from the Pays d'Oc region (Rs 667): well made, with a nice balance of fruitiness and dryness. Other winners were from Australia, which reliably produces wines at fair prices that are easy to like. Lindeman's Bin 77 Semillion-Chardonnay blend, 2000, and their Bin 65 Chardonnay, 2001, both at Rs 684, were both a bit more fruity and less restrained than their French competition: hardly a surprise, given who made them.

Though the Valley seems awash in wine (and beer), I must end this article on a somewhat sombre note. Recently, while at a feast, I was offered *ela*, and was rather disappointed when two bottles of Bagpipe appeared instead of that wonderful local fire water made from rice or *baji*. On Sankranti, I noticed among the feasters at Ta Bahal in Patan some folks who had bottles of San Miguel sitting on the ground beside their *laptas* of *baji*, *chhuela*, and *aluya achar*. A *bhwe* is just not a *bhwe* without *ela* and *thon*, the latter being that wonderful not quite bubbly, not quite sweet, not quite sour, milky beverage that was a required part of the finale to long pujas twenty years ago. I wish that there were some way of making these two beverages, in their wonderful authentic and varied forms, available in ways so that they could take their rightful places alongside the Johnny Walkers and San Miguels in the Bluebirds, Namastes, and Green Lines (pic, bottom left) of the Valley, and thus be valorised by the market economy that now seems to be so readily dominated by foreign intruders. ♦

bottled by Valensac-Marency for Rs 650. This wine will be better in a couple of years, but in case you don't have that kind of time, a little artificial respiration does wonders. Many people know to let a young red wine breathe by opening the bottle an hour or so before drinking it, but this actually does very little. This is why I suggest taking a more active role with wines that are a bit harsh, and transferring the wine to another glass container: a lot more breathing goes on, and the transformation can be miraculous. More important than the specific vintage, it is more important to

remember that reds age more gracefully than whites. In Kathmandu, one should generally avoid whites over three or four years old.

Two wonderful surprises in the red category that surfaced at a recent tasting inspired by this assignment were an Italian Barbera d'Asti, La Rovere, 1998 (Rs 695) and a Cabernet-Malbec from, of all places, Mexico. The first was a surprise because of the bottle, which was frosted in order to give the appearance of being dusty. I generally avoid wine in bottles that seem to be trying too hard, but this

**Holy Nepal Enterprises**  
 Importer of Wine, Champagne, Scotch Whisky etc.  
 Kha 1/498 2nd Fl. Tel: 4220297, 4230391  
 G.P.O. Box 2817 Fax: 00977-1-4223211  
 Kathmandu, Nepal Email: pkmpex@wlink.com.np

## THE FINEST WINES IN KATHMANDU

**Green Line Centre (Pvt.) Ltd.** Kantipath, Kathmandu, Nepal  
 [A House of Quality Wine Liquors and Whisky] Tel: 4257277 Email: greenline@wlink.com.np



# The war over settlements

Amos Oz, one of Israel's best known writers, claims that the current Palestinian-Israeli war is actually two wars: an "unjust" war against Israel and the Jews to establish a fundamentalist Islamic state in an "Arab Palestine," and the Palestinian people's "just" war for an independent state worthy of the name. Conversely, Israel is also fighting two wars: a just war to defend its right to exist, accepted in its integrity and security in the Middle East, and an unjust and futile war to perpetuate its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the Jewish settlements located there.

There are about 220,000 Israeli settlers in the West Bank and Gaza, excluding the approximately 190,000 people living in the neighbourhoods of Jerusalem that extend beyond the pre-1967 border of the old, divided Jerusalem. Despite the intifada, the number of settlers has decreased in only a few of the 144 settlements, and there are over 7,000 settlers in the Gaza Strip alone, in 16 communities occupying 20 percent of an impoverished land already suffering one of the highest population densities in the world.

Israeli state support for expanding settlements is substantial. In the last ten years, settlements received annual subsidies equal to roughly • 920 per capita, while the development towns have received • 575 and Arab communities in Israel • 430. State funds finance 50 percent of housing costs in the settlements, compared to 25 percent in Israel.



What is the objective of this policy of expansion in the occupied territories? Why have settlements been established even in areas most densely populated by Palestinians? Those territories that were to be used after the 1967 war as bargaining chips in exchange for recognition of Israel and peace are now permanently occupied in order to prevent the formation of a Palestinian state with the sovereignty and territorial continuity necessary for a small but autonomous state. In reality, the territories are an extension of Israeli sovereignty; the army is there to protect

the settlers and to assert Israel's de facto sovereignty over them. But the occupation has produced malignant effects: restrictions on freedom of movement, daily harassment and humiliation and road blocks (pic, top). As a result, the occupied territories have become an obstacle to peace and, paradoxically, a threat to the very security of Israel, its citizens and its soldiers. Israelis cannot dominate another people and live in a democratic state in keeping with Zionist ideals unless they "free" themselves of the territories and aim at

the coexistence of two states with recognised borders and good neighbourly relations. Given magnitude of settlement and the power of vested interests, a forced evacuation of the occupied territories is unthinkable. But any agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, will call for a first phase of evacuation of the at least 50,000-60,000 people living in the more distant and scattered settlements. Three years ago, Premier Ehud Barak proposed a possible solution for approximately 150,000 settlers:

**Israel must "free" itself of the territories and aim at peaceful coexistence.**

combining some of the large settlements into contiguous blocks and annexing them to Israel along with the sprawling suburbs of Jerusalem, with Israeli land handed over to the future state of Palestine in exchange. But it is unlikely that the Palestinians would accept such a solution. So some kind of system of incentives must be devised to encourage a large portion of settlers to repatriate and to allow for the continued presence of the others in the territories while respecting Palestinian sovereignty. This will be easier for those settlers who moved to the territories for pragmatic reasons (subsidised housing, the quality of suburban life, tax incentives), because they are basically commuters, with a lifestyle that is not much different than if they were living in Israel.

state and subject to its laws. But the settlers driven by a nationalist-religious ideology, devoted to the myth of a "Great Israel" and convinced that they are fulfilling the biblical dictate of repossessing the sacred land, will oppose evacuation. They will nevertheless have to submit to the democratic decisions of their government. How much would such repatriation cost? Let's make a rough estimate. If 60-70 percent of settlers were willing to return to Israel, this would amount to 130,000-150,000 people or approximately 25,000-30,000 families. On the basis of the average price of a home in Israel (approximately • 280,000 per family), one could estimate a total cost of • 7-9 billion.

Today, with the terrorist attacks along the roads and the insecurity, and tomorrow, with the establishment of a Palestinian state, these settlers will probably want to return to live within Israel's borders. Perhaps, in a future of peaceful coexistence and open borders, there could even be Jewish communities with autonomous administrations in the territories, just as there are such Arab communities in Israel now: the Jews that stay on would be foreign residents in the Palestinian

Within the framework of an overall settlement of the conflict, a number of countries could contribute to this sum: the United States and the European Union countries, as well as Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states. By purchasing the settlers' homes, they could then hand them over to Palestinian refugees settling in the future state of Palestine. ♦

(© Project Syndicate)

(Giorgio Gomel is an economist and a founder of the Martin Buber - Jews for Peace Group.)

Learn the **art** of **beauty**.  
celebrate the **woman** in you.

Hyatt Regency in association with Fair & Lovely presents a workshop on **Introduction to Makeup Understanding Skin Tones Face Structures and Hair Care**

Conducted by **Yatan & Jojo** make over artists for leading Bollywood stars and fashion houses such as Lancôme, Christian Dior, YSL, Lakmé, Vogue and many more.

Venue : Hyatt Regency  
Date : June 23rd, 2003  
Time : 11am to 4pm  
Price : Rs. 3000

The recipe for the perfect face includes a sumptuous lunch followed by tea and snacks in the evening.

For further details contact 4491234.

**EPSON**  
THE POWER TO CREATE

PROJECTORS  
**EMP-52**  
Multimedia Projector

is your **PROJECTOR** reproducing the **TRU COLOR?**

It's time to use an **EPSON sRGB Complaint Projector!**

- Equipped with world's first horizontal keystone correction
- Comply with Microsoft-developed sRGB colour matching specification
- Exclusive EPSON ColourReality colour processing technology
- Whisper-quiet operation • Light weight at 2.8 kg

EMP 53 SVGA 1700 ANSI Lumens	EMP 720 XGA 1500 ANSI Lumens	EMP 735 XGA 2000 ANSI Lumens	EMP 811 XGA 2000 ANSI Lumens	EMP 8300 XGA 5200 ANSI Lumens
EMP 73 XGA 1500 ANSI Lumens	EMP 730 XGA 2000 ANSI Lumens			

**MERCANTILE OFFICE SYSTEMS**

Mercantile Building, Durbar Marg, Kathmandu  
Tel: 4220773, 4243566 Fax: 977-1-4225407 Email: market@mos.com.np

# A real taste of sanctions

Hitting Rangoon where it counts most.



By moving to impose the toughest sanctions on Burma so far of any Western country, the US Congress may finally give the junta an overdue lesson on the economic pain such punitive measures can bring.

The sanctions being put in place by the US Congress, especially the ban on imports from Burma, will hit Rangoon where it counts most—because the United States is the principal market for Burmese-made goods, according to a report on the impact of sanctions being prepared by ALTSEAN. In 2001, Burma shipped \$456 million worth of goods to US markets, up from \$443 million in 2000, reveals the report due to be published in July. The European Union, which has been a consistent second after the US market from 1995 to 2001, imported \$404 million worth of goods from Burma in 2001.

Between 1995 and 2001, Burmese exports to the United States, European Union, Australia and Canada increased by an average of 435 percent, the report states. “While the SPDC is making concerned efforts to develop trade regionally, it would be difficult at best to replace these major markets,” it says. “This [US ban] is serious, because no one else has banned imports from Burma,” says Stothard. “It will drastically reduce the flow of US dollars, which the SPDC needs.”

The US Congress is also pushing for a freeze of assets in the United States belonging to the regime and its leaders, and for Washington to oppose any loans to

Burma from international financial institutions such as the World Bank. These sweeping measures were never the case in the past, when Western governments talked about the threat of sanctions or imposed “tough measures” to bring about political change in Burma. Even when Washington banned new US investments in Burma in 1997, the prospect of Rangoon crippling under the economic strain was not amply evident.

The measures sought by the US Congress “will cause a stir because the language is so strong,” adds Debbie Stothard of the Alternative ASEAN Network on Burma (ALTSEAN), a regional group lobbying for human rights and democracy in Burma. “A lot of US companies managed to bypass the

1997 law, although campaigns in the US by groups like the Free Burma Coalition have led to some companies pulling out of Burma,” she says in an interview.

But the tough US moves may well make it easier for other Western governments to take more action against Burma, or at least put the spotlight on the economic ties that other Western nations have with Rangoon. For instance, Britain has spoken out against the military regime, but has not put the brakes on its investments in Burma. By 2000, Britain had close to \$1.4 billion worth of investments in the country, according to ALTSEAN’s findings. Burma’s Southeast Asian neighbours, too, opted for “constructive engagement” to nudge the junta toward openness. But in the wake of the US Congress’ moves, it may soon prove embarrassing to be seen cuddling with Burma’s strongmen for the sake of profits and talking the language of democracy at the same time.

On 30 May, the military regime triggered global outrage after Suu Kyi and members of her party, the National League for Democracy (NLD), were attacked by individuals linked to the junta while they were visiting supporters in a town north of Rangoon. Noble laureate Suu Kyi and 18 NLD officials were subsequently whisked away by the junta and are being kept in “protective custody”. ♦ (IPS)

## Dodging queries

CANBERRA – Months after a row erupted over the Australian government’s role in the 2001 sinking of a boat carrying asylum seekers from Indonesia, a government minister and the head of the Australian Federal Police (AFP) have refused to discuss crucial details of what was known about the ill-fated voyage.

Codenamed SIEV-X by the Australian military, the boat sank on 19 October 2001 in international waters off Australia’s northern coast, drowning 353 mostly Iraqi and Afghans. The Australian government claimed it had no prior knowledge of the location, time of departure or where the SIEV-X sank. The release in February 2003 of a previously secret diplomatic cable, which the Australian Embassy sent the day after the sinking became public knowledge, revealed that officials were aware of those crucial details.

This week, AFP Commissioner Mick Keelty and Justice Minister Sen Chris Ellison invoked “public interest immunity” rather than answer critical questions about their knowledge of the boat’s voyage. (IPS)

## Little camel jockeys

KARACHI – The use of young boys as camel jockeys has been a controversial issue for years. Most boys come from the subcontinent. Many are brought by their parents, others are smuggled and sold into the trade, which activists have called “inhumane”. The UAE has a 1993 law banning the use of small children in the national sport of camel racing. Last year, the government said it would enforce a ban on jockeys younger than 15.

But the demand continues to see young boys headed for the Gulf.

Mushtaq Ahmed of the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation says parents are so poor that they are willing to sacrifice one child so that the rest can live off him. The solution he believes lies in setting up small cottage industries or microcredit schemes. Almost all the wards at the Edhi Home in Korangi want to return to the UAE to race camels. The \$54 they were paid per race is far more than they could otherwise earn. Run by the Edhi Foundation, the home estimates nearly 2,000 boys are working as camel jockeys in the Gulf. (IPS)



## SNV/Nepal Vacancy Announcement

Nepal

SNV/Nepal, a Dutch non-government development organisation, has been working in Nepal since 1980. SNV Nepal focuses on capacitating key institutions at the district, regional and national level with the ability to serve the interests of marginal areas. SNV’s sectoral niches are in governance, private sector development and natural resource management.



SNV/Nepal invites qualified Nepali citizens to apply for the post of

### Sector Programme Officer for Governance Sector

The **Sector Programme Officer** will be stationed in Kathmandu with overall responsibility to assist and advise Sector Manager (SM) in the formulation and management of Sector Programmes. The specific responsibilities include:

- Assisting in the planning and development of sector plans and programmes.
- Developing practical and realistic mechanism/tool to monitor the sector programme activities, plans and finances from SNV side and its effective and timely reporting.
- Communication, documentation and Information compilation with the Sector team.
- Networking/external relations with like-minded organisations/institutions related to sector programmes.

**Required skills:** Fluency in spoken and written English, excellent report writing skills, highly developed social & inter-personal skills, administrative skills, ability to work independently & under pressure, intercultural sensitivity and gender awareness & social inclusion. The candidate should have the ability to learn & express oneself and to organise different aspects of the job in an effective & efficient way.

**Required Knowledge:** Bachelors in Commerce or Social Sciences, and atleast 3 years of working experience in Governance Program.

Detailed Function Task Description is available for pick up from **Organisation Development Centre (ODC)** from June 19, 2003 onwards or it could be accessed through our website [www.odcentre.org](http://www.odcentre.org) under the category “Recruitment”. Candidates unable to pick up the package or access website may request for it through e-mail.



### Organisation Development Centre (ODC)

GPO 8975 EPC 443, Jhamsikhel, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Phone: (977-1)-5551979, 5524540

E-mail: [odc@odcentre.org](mailto:odc@odcentre.org)

Applications are to be sent to the above address along with a cover letter with the latest curriculum vitae. Your daytime contact number and the names of two referees along with their contact address/telephone numbers are essential for processing your applications. Only short listed candidates will be notified. Applications will be accepted till **5:00 PM on Wednesday, July 9, 2003.**

**SNV/Nepal has women friendly terms of employment.  
Appointment could commence as early as August 1, 2003.**

The future belongs to those who prepare for it today.



## NATIONAL COLLEGE

For higher education (NCHE) Estb.1996

Offering +2 level education along with Bachelor in Development Studies, Kathmandu University program.

### OPENS ADMISSION

For class XI

Science Management Humanities

#### Eligibility:

At least 60% for science, 50% for Management and Humanities in the SLC or equivalent

#### Selection Criteria:

On the basis of entrance test, interview and SLC score

#### Distinct features of National College:

- + Small class size, with all senior experienced faculty set for academic excellence.
- + Classroom workshop, field-trips, varieties of extra-curricular activities, project work designed to bring out overall personality development of the student.

Full and partial scholarship for deserving students

Hostel & Transportation facilities available

For further information and application forms:

**NATIONAL COLLEGE** for higher education  
Baluwatar (near Nepal Rastra Bank) P.O.Box 13543  
Tel: 4420871, 4440410, E-mail: [nche@wlink.com.np](mailto:nche@wlink.com.np)

Be a part of the system dedicated to  
quality education in quality setting

## NEW BOOKS

- Sir Edmund Hillary and the people of Everest  
-Anne B. Keiser & Cynthia Rush Ramsay
- Healing beyond the body  
-Larry Dossey, MD.

Vajra Book Shop  
Jyancha, Thamel (Hotel Sorting)  
P.O. Box 21779, Kathmandu  
Tel/Fax: 4220562  
email: [bdar.la@mos.com.np](mailto:bdar.la@mos.com.np)

# Immunised impunity

Shiva Gaunle in *Himal Khabarpatrika*, 15-29 June



More than a year after Hemant and Anjali Shrestha were hacked to death at their rented Kathmandu apartment, their murderers have not been caught. The police know who they are—people who visited the Shrestha couple before the incident—but have not been able to bring the culprits to justice.

Two years ago industrialist Tulsi Agrawal's kidnapping from a Biratnagar market made national news. The public heard nothing after his dramatic release six weeks later. Silence from Agrawal is natural under the circumstances, but the reticence of government agencies is a mystery. Especially or perhaps because Umesh Giri, a close aide of former home minister Khum Bhadur Khadka, is rumoured to have had a hand in the crime.



Only last month Ramesh Sharma of the UML suffered severe injuries in one eye at the hands of the police. The party's general secretary Madhab Kumar Nepal and Nepali Congress president Girija Prasad all expressed their sympathy, but the state did not find it necessary to investigate.

The assassins of late Inspector General of Armed Police Force Krishna Mohan Shrestha (*pic, top*) and his wife Nudup Shrestha have gone unpunished. In the name of creating a conducive environment for the peace talks, the government released them as soon as they were arrested. Prem Kumari, the murdered officer's mother, was shattered by that decision. "I grieve over the loss of my son and daughter-in-law, but am deeply saddened by the fact that the killers walked away freely. How can the state be so indifferent?" she asks.

Seventeen labourers from Dhading who were building an airport at Kalikot were killed by security forces who mistook them for Maoists. Two years after the incident the government has not even begun an investigation into the matter, let alone punished those who were responsible.

These incidents send a message: Nepali society is not safe, it denies justice to victims and allows crimes to go unpunished. This impunity marks our history too. Those guilty of the Bhandarkhal and Kot massacres did not end up in jail, but were rewarded with the reigns of power. The Namita-Sumita scandal nearly three years ago and the recent murder of musician Praveen Gurung are examples of even the palace siding with impunity.

Even more dangerous is the state's indifference to the over seven thousand lives lost, thousands 'disappeared' and physically handicapped during the Maoist insurgency. "In the name of arresting terrorism, the state itself encouraged impunity that is becoming the culture of the nation," says Human Rights activist Krishna Pahadi. "This encouraged the police and army personnel who tortured civilians."

Impunity in Nepal was included in the Amnesty International 2002 report which expressed concern over the escalating number of killings, torture, arrests, kidnappings and disappearances by the security forces and the Maoists.

## Deuba's undoing

Tarun, 16 June



The curtain is slowly drawing up to reveal India's role in the ousting of Sher Bahadur Deuba from the position of prime minister. The inside story reveals how our southern neighbour instigated the king against Deuba and allowed the Maoists to use its territory to transport arms and ammunition.

Last September, Deuba was all set to sign a treaty against landmines in a meeting at Canada. Just before he left, he decided to replace the Royal Nepali Army's SLR rifles with standard NATO issues. During his first tenure of premiership eight years ago, Deuba had imported 3,000 pieces of M16 NATO standard commando rifles. Some MPs close to South Block raised concerns. For one thing, India was the RNA's main supplier of SLR rifles in the past, benefiting from a side trade in Indian bullets too. Deuba's decision meant a loss for the Indian munition suppliers, which began the Indian game of dislodging Deuba.

In the meantime, amidst mounting Maoist destruction of public infrastructure, many foreign governments sent aid to the RNA. China donated communication equipment, the UK sent helicopters and the US provided tactical equipment. Not to be outdone, India sent two Chetank helicopters and 90 trucks.

What India actually had in mind was to weaken the RNA through Maoist attacks, and force the king's hand into ousting Deuba. The government entered into a five-year military agreement with the US and plans were afoot to form a special commando team within the army. When India came to know that the US was planning to train Nepali would-be commandos, it made a deal with the king. He would remove Deuba and New Delhi would give him a Maoist ceasefire. It worked and Sher Bahadur Deuba found himself out of office.

## Break up

Budhabar, 11 June



The recently published report of the UML's Seventh National Convention shows the majority of its leaders and workers are highly-educated youths. Out of the 1,012 convention participants 44 percent held university degrees. The largest percentage, 27.5 percent, hold bachelors' degree, master's degree holders were 16 percent and less than one percent had doctorates. About eight percent chose not to mention their academic qualifications. It is estimated that the majority in this category boycotted "bourgeois" education and are self-taught. Only two percent of the participants belonged to the 24-29 age bracket, 30 percent came from 30-39 age group, while 45 percent belonged to 40-49 age group. Less than 1 percent of the participant were older than 70 years. The vast majority, 76.5 percent, are younger than 50. The UML report also labels itself a truly representative party. Seven percent of its cadres are peasants, 13 percent are women, two percent are dalit, 12 percent are janjatis and seven percent are madhesis.



front" of female leaders from political parties and independent female intellectuals to ensure the success of the on-going peace talks. Although Durga Pokharel agreed to the proposal no concrete decision was made.

Yami said nearly 33 percent of the Maoist army were female, and that two had risen up the ranks to become brigade commanders. "In some cases men have abandoned weapons and run from encounters, but women have never done so. We won all the battles that involved a large number of women guerillas," said Yami.

The party not only arranges weddings between members but has also set up "childcare centres" around Rukum, Rolpa and other Maoist hotbeds. Literacy among Maoist women is highly encouraged. Yami also confirmed the recruitment of homosexuals. In a short conversation regarding monarchy, Yami said the crown could never be a symbol of Nepal's unity. Yami wore military green shirt and pants. There was a conspicuous lack of personal bodyguards.

## Party woman

Ghatna Ra Bichar, 18 June



Five months into the ceasefire, Hisila Yami, Central Working Committee member and chief of the Women Department of the Maoist party, recently attended a meeting in Kathmandu. It was her first public appearance in eight years after she went underground.

The meeting was organised at the office of Asmita Women's Publications and was attended by the UML supported All Nepal Women's Association (ALWA) chief Goma Devkota, United People's Front supported ANWA chief Shashi Shrestha, National Women's Commission chief Durga Pokharel, Mukta Shrestha of *Mulyankan*, author Sudha Tripathi along with three women representing ANWA (Revolutionary), and Yami's sister-in-law Durga Neupane.

During the three-hour session, the women discussed the formation of a joint "women's

How Surya Bahadur Thapa succeeded Chand and what role the political parties played is something that is slowly becoming clearer.

We respect Thapa but he is a Panchayat-era leader. To illustrate my point is a modified version of an old tale: King Gyanendra, out on a drive late one night, reached Singha Darbar. "Everyone is on horseback and I have to stand," he heard someone mutter. To his surprise, it was the statue of King Prithbi Narayan Shah. "Bring me a horse right away," Prithbi Narayan ordered. The king called Surya Bahadur Thapa to tell him what happened. Thapa scoffed: "How can a stone statue speak?" but went with the king to see for himself. On seeing Thapa, the same voice said, "I asked for a horse, and you brought me an ass."

If the king carries on his present path, the people will demand a donkey if he brings a horse and vice-versa. In the past, I have counselled the king on the temperament of the people. If the king does not make a timely decision, the people will demand a constituent assembly if he prepares to reinstate the parliament. And when he nods at the constituent assembly, there will be cries for a republic. If the king agrees to that, the people may ask for his exile.

We are pro-monarchy and our party has earned the name of "royal congress". But our colours are changing, and this is something we don't want. Why did the king not invite our party? Why did he remove Deuba? Those were rash moves, and he must be regretting them now. (Excerpted from a speech delivered at the Deuba Congress rally in Kathmandu 13 June.)

## Quite contrary

Pradeep Giri of the Deuba Congress in *Punaryagaran*, 17 June



We all said that it was a big mistake when Lokendra Bahadur Chand was made prime minister. The king should have corrected his error, he had time to do it. But one fine morning, he woke up and Chand fell out of favour. Now Chand, GP Koirala and the media all have different theories on what led the king to make that move.



Friday tenant.

हिमाल Robin Sayami in *Himal Khabarpatrika*, 15-29 June.

### QUOTE OF THE WEEK

The peace process has already been broken. It just has not been declared. But we are patient, we have not given up yet.

- Ram Bahadur "Badal" Thapa, member of the Maoist negotiation team. *Spacetime*, 15 June.

## SLC failures

Kantipur, 16 June



The good news is the government could bring out the School Leaving Certificate results on time this year. The bad news is that only a third of the total examinees got through the 'iron gate'.

Who are these unsuccessful students that make 70 percent of the failures? Do they come from urban or rural areas and did the students go to government or private schools? What is the socio-economic status of their parents? These are not easy questions to answer but one thing is for sure: the recent SLC results drew a line between the haves and have-nots, a fact that the United Nations and other NGOs confirm. Children from a lower economic strata get stranded on the SLC slope. Many parents of those who failed had to cut corners to send their child to school, often depriving themselves of basics like food. It will jeopardise the future of this country if they conclude that making their children plough the fields is far better than sending them to school. And disillusioned youths become easy prey to extremist ideologies. The people already have had a bellyful of that.

We cannot blame these dismal results on students alone. Teachers, parents and the government's education policy are equally responsible. The latest SLC results puts two challenges to the government, society and policy planners. The first is to ensure higher education opportunities for the 30 percent who made it through the high school exam. The second is to create an environment where the failures get a chance. Schools that have a low pass percentage must be held responsible. It is the job of the department of education and SLC office to investigate why 70 out of every 100 students failed this exam. Something has gone terribly wrong.



## NEPALITERATURE

by MANJUSHREE THAPA

## Buddha Sayami

# The voice of the times

The Nepal-Bhasa poet Buddha Sayami is one of the most poignant chroniclers of our times, expressing the prevalent desire of progressive Nepal to be done with the conservatism of the past, and to establish a new order. Sayami's unafraid voice echoes the sentiments of the masses, calling for change faster than it is being, or has ever been, delivered. This call is clear in his first iconoclastic poem:

### Let me tear apart your seal

I am no prince  
to take satisfaction at my father's death

Yes I am discontented  
by my room filled with smoke  
Yes in me lies a rebellion  
against our way of staying silent  
of pretending not to notice  
all that is plain to see

I am my mother's agony of rape  
or the sign of her consent to pleasure  
My father the cause of my arising  
I am not your new edition:  
The cover alone has been changed  
I cannot carry around your life  
the way an official refers in haste  
to the above-mentioned

I cannot breathe in your prayer room  
with its stench of murder  
Your statues of great compassion  
stand as obstacles to my footsteps  
The value of your belongings  
have diminished in my eyes  
Father Why do I see parasites  
in the medals that decorate your chest?

Father I cannot live the way you do  
Letting vultures pounce on your belongings  
while you swallow your own saliva  
chewing up all your desires  
Innumerable roads writhe at my feet today  
My throat scratches in the urge to express itself

Father Let me tear apart not you  
but the seal of your culture and thinking

This is where I lie captive

The second poem, below, speaks to all those who have ever occupied a podium in Nepal, spewing out (more often than not) hollow words. Sayami addresses himself—a poet and writer—but his judgment applies equally to politicians, academics, experts, and dignitaries, both native and foreign...In asking us all to adopt egolessness and to acknowledge the collective nature of our project, Sayami invokes a Buddhist ethics in this poem.

### No need for embarrassment, I'm unmasking my own face (not yours)

(Neither feet nor hands nor even the eyes  
The meaning of feet alone—is the end of their movement)

I am perhaps the greatest admirer of my own form  
I am perhaps the most ardent devotee of my own statue  
Here 'we' are merely horses that 'I' ride  
'I'—a pox  
and yes, an epidemic in waiting  
Any place where "I" am raised becomes putrescent  
Ah! How many maggots of "I" and "me"  
squirm within our bodies  
One individual one island  
separate  
alone  
Each "I" taking pride at its height  
When the thick clouds shift the illusions dissipate  
from tender glances  
There isn't just one mountain here The illusions dissipate  
The closest mountain isn't the highest one  
The illusions dissipate

Light doesn't come from mountains  
Light is but the call of the age  
Oh poet writer important person  
oh "I" presiding over the mike on the stage:  
what of the welfare of the girls and boys  
who are supporting the weight of this stage?  
The girls and boys who remain invisible  
in order to hold up the stage:  
What of their aspiration?

How eager is  
the young "I" who lacks the child's experience  
to clear a place for one's seat  
amid heads bowed down in devotion  
How shameless to let loose  
the bulls of 'I' and 'me'  
on the just-sprouting seeds  
of the yield of collective labour

The Administrative Officer  
The World Bank  
P.O. Box 798 THE WORLD BANK  
Kathmandu KATHMANDU OFFICE  
Email: rkunwar@worldbank.org

#### VACANCY

No telephone or personal inquiries please.

#### Rural Development Economist position based in Kathmandu Nepal

The World Bank is seeking applications for a Rural Development Economist position based in Kathmandu Nepal.

The World Bank seeks to strengthen its contribution to rural development in Nepal through an integrated approach. This entails building meaningful consensus with a broad spectrum of stakeholders on rural development strategies, agricultural policies, productivity, rural access, and natural resources management; promoting rural decentralization and community-based development; ensuring selectivity in assistance based on comparative advantages; scaling up best practice; emphasizing learning and knowledge transfer in both grassroots and government institutions; fostering sustainability and governance; supporting inter-sector coordination for an integrated approach to program implementation; and forming inter-sectoral task teams to help develop integrated approaches to projects and programs.

#### Principal Accountabilities

The South Asia Rural Development Unit is seeking to recruit an outstanding person who, based in the Nepal Country Office, can motivate policy dialogue with the Government on a wide range of rural development issues on a continual basis and follow through with implementation of agreed programs and projects to support the Government's reform process. The person is expected to have proven analytical and operational experience in leading cross-sectoral teams in sector policy analysis, advisory services, strategy formulation, and implementation for a variety of areas such as: rural development, agriculture policies, irrigation, decentralization, rural access, natural resources management, and institutional reform. The person in this position will report to the Sector Manager in the Rural Development Unit in South Asia. For the purpose of the coordination of activities in the country office and general local administrative issue he will need to refer to the Nepal Country Director.

#### The main areas of responsibility are:

1. Contribute to the discussion and formulation of sectoral strategies and country policy analysis. Engage the Government as well as the Bank's own Nepal Country Team on strategic issues, policy dialogue and program developments in the sector.
2. Take the lead or participate as team member in the preparation of sector work or analytical and advisory services.
3. Take the lead or participate as team member in the preparation and supervision of rural development projects or components.
4. Take the lead or participate as team member in developing stronger coordination with other units in the Bank on rural development related issues, such as rural access, rural electrification, rural drinking water and sanitation, education, health, labor market, and social inclusion.
5. In this regard, as necessary, work on related economic and policy issues to support the work of other units.
6. Provide feedback and comments to policy notes, discussion papers, briefing notes, reports, etc.. so as to facilitate on-going sector dialogue and knowledge.
7. Serve as liaison between the client and the Bank on projects that he/she will be assigned to, on the rural portfolio and dialogue in general. Maintaining good contacts with counterparts, following up on requests and participating in meetings and missions as required.
8. Maintain good contacts with the NGO community and other donors, actively pursuing coordination and dialogue.
9. Prepare and manage cross-learning activities, such as workshops, field visits, etc. Ensure the preparation and dissemination of periodic reports on the projects to ensure that both clients and Bank remain informed about the projects experiences.

To achieve the above he/she will have to (i) interact and coordinate with development partners (bilaterals, multilaterals, associations) and professional organizations on issues pertinent to the Bank's assistance; ii) promote and monitor sectoral initiatives, identify regional and cross-cutting sectoral issues for Country management attention and ensure that links across sectors are strengthened to promote cross-sector teams as needed.

#### Qualifications

- \* High degree of integrity, dedication and commitment to obtain results in sustainable rural development and poverty alleviation, as well as ability to inspire trust and build partnerships with clients, team members, colleagues, and management;
- \* A minimum of a Master's degree in agricultural economics, applied economics, or in a related field;
- \* A minimum of 8 years of relevant professional and operational experience in sector work and project analysis in the area of rural development, agriculture policies, natural resources management;
- \* Demonstrated relevant experience in Rural Development/Natural Resource Management sector analysis, preparation of reports and discussion notes, and proven ability to conceptualize and deliver high quality major economic and sector work;
- \* Demonstrated experience in leading complex multi-sectoral and interdisciplinary missions and analytical skills in policy analysis and formulation;
- \* Strong written, oral communication, listening and interpersonal skills;
- \* Ability to manage and resolve complex issues, while demonstrating cultural sensitivities;
- \* Demonstrated experience in outreach and working with a wide range of stakeholders and donors; and
- \* Demonstrated leadership skills, ability to coordinate and manage multi-disciplinary teams, mentoring skills, ability to supervise consultants, as well as strong orientation to being a team player and working in a team-based, decentralized, multi-cultural, cross-sectoral and matrix management.

The World Bank is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate with respect to gender, religion, ethnic origin or caste. Female candidates are strongly encouraged to apply. Applicants should send their applications by July 16, 2003 to:

**Carlsberg** Green Bar of the month

Log on to [www.carlsberg.com.np](http://www.carlsberg.com.np) and get a chance to win chilled carlsberg.

**Lhasa Restaurant & Bar**  
Thamel, Kathmandu, Nepal, Tel: 4-425185

**ABOUT TOWN**

- FESTIVAL AND EXHIBITIONS**
- ❖ **Pictures from Modern Life in Nepal** photographs by William Mebane till 4 July at Siddhartha Art Gallery, Baber Mahal Revisited. 4411122
  - ❖ **Walking** photographs by Ashok R Shakya from 17-22 June at Park Gallery, Lazimpat. 981055263.
  - ❖ **Jewellery** from North India and Nepal exhibition and sale. 10AM-5PM on 21 June. Maya Rana 4371571
  - ❖ **The Story of Nature** paintings by Devina Malla at NAFA Hall, Naxal till 22 June. 4411729
  - ❖ **Soham** silver jewellery by Shruiti. 22 June till 6 July at Gallery Nine, Lazimpat. 4436994
- EVENTS**
- ❖ **Imaging Everest** photographic exhibition from the Royal Geographical Society, London, in association with The British Council, Kathmandu. 8.30 AM-4.45 PM till 31 July at the British Council, Lainchour.
  - ❖ **Hyatt Opens Tennis Tournament** 19-21 June. For registrations: Hyatt Regency Kathmandu 4491234 ext 5165
  - ❖ **Beauty workshop** by Yatan and Jojo. 11AM-4PM on 23 June. Rs 3,000 including lunch and tea. Hyatt Regency Kathmandu. 4491234
- MUSIC**
- ❖ **Cadenza live** 7.30PM every Wednesday and Saturday. Rs 200 entry. Interested musicians welcome to jam. Upstairs Jazz Bar, Lazimpat.
  - ❖ **1974 AD live** at Rox Garden, Hyatt Regency on 20 June, 8PM onwards. 4491234
  - ❖ **Live Music** Friday at 5.30 PM, Saturday movie at 4.30 PM. Jivin' Joe's Restaurant, Kupondole.
  - ❖ **Live Acoustic Jam** 7PM on Saturdays at Himalatte Cafe, Thamel. 4256738
  - ❖ **Full Circle** acoustic jam every Friday at New Orleans Cafe, Thamel. 4427311
  - ❖ **Thunderbolt** with Ram Shrestha and Sabu Lama. 8PM onwards Wednesdays and Saturdays at the Red Onion Bar, Lazimpat. 4416071
  - ❖ **The Jazz Bar** presents Abhaya and The Steam Injuns. 7PM onwards, 20 June. 50 percent discount on food and drinks. Shangri-la Hotel, Lazimpat. 4412999
  - ❖ **International music day** Free concert at the Alliance Française. 12PM till late on 21 June.
  - ❖ **Chill out Friday** jazz and club music 7PM onwards. Free entrance. The Club, Bhat Bhateni. 4440163
- DRINKS**
- ❖ **Fusion** offers over 100 cocktails. Happy hour from 6-7PM. Dwarika's Hotel.
  - ❖ **K-too! Special** Tropical Khukuri drinks Rs 125 or Rs 750 for every 1.5 litre. Free Irish Coffee with every main course. K-too! Beer & Steakhouse, Thamel. 4433043.
  - ❖ **The Piano Lounge & Bar** features the Trio Givone for the best Gypsy music, cocktails and snacks. Hotel Yak & Yeti.
- FOOD**
- ❖ **Friday BBQ** at the Summit Hotel with mouth watering 10 different delicious salads. 6.30 PM onwards. Rs 500 + tax. 5521810.
  - ❖ **Traditional Nepali Thali lunch** at Patan Museum Café inside Patan Museum. 11AM-2.30 PM. Cocktails and snacks from 4-6.30 PM. 5526271.
  - ❖ **Mexican Food festival** from 13-22 June. Dinner for Rs 750 + tax. The Café at Hyatt Regency, Kathmandu. 4491234
  - ❖ **Weekends BBQ** at the Shambala Garden. 50 percent off through June. Shangri-la Hotel, Lazimpat. 4412999
  - ❖ **Summer specials** smoked salmon soufflé, shrimp newburg and crispy duck breast. Kilroy's of Kathmandu, Thamel. 4250440
  - ❖ **Naachghar Revisited** with Myrna, an international exotic dancer, and North Indian delicacies. Every evening from 7.30 PM onwards. Rs 749 per person. Hotel Yak & Yeti, Durbar Marg.
  - ❖ **Wood fired pizzas, Baskin Robbins icecream, cocktails and coffee** at the Roadhouse Café, Thamel.
  - ❖ **World BBQ Nite** 27 June at Dwarika's Hotel. Singaporean satay, Persian kababs, Churasqueria. Rs 699 + tax. 4479488.
  - ❖ **Weekend breakfast:** Smoked salmon scrambled eggs and filtered coffee Rs 100. 9AM-12PM. Thomas Kilroy at 1905, Kantipath. 4225272
  - ❖ **Saturday BBQ Lunch** at Club Himalaya Nagarkot. Rs 500 per person. 4680083
  - ❖ **Papaya salad**, seasonal vegetables with fillet or chicken and Italian icecream at Singma, Jawlakhel, Lalitpur. 552004
- GETAWAYS**
- ❖ **Dakshinkali Package** every Saturday Rs 500+tax. 4370714, 4371537
  - ❖ **Shivapuri Heights** a traditional cottage with modern facilities. Rs 1,850 pp. [www.escape2nepal.com](http://www.escape2nepal.com), Email: [info@escape2nepal.com](mailto:info@escape2nepal.com)
  - ❖ **Great Godavari Getaway** special weekend packages. Godavari Village Resort. 5560675
  - ❖ **The secret of Kathmandu** Overnight package \$99. Dwarika's Hotel. 4479488
  - ❖ **Gamcha Organic Farm Guesthouse** Traditional Nepali farmhouse. 6631734.
  - ❖ **Writing Retreat** Full board package. Aesthetic living, innovative thinking, creative writing and nature at Park Village Resort, Budhanilkantha. 375280
  - ❖ **Tiger Mountain Pokhara Lodge** Special offers for Nepalis and expats. 01-361500 TMPL Reservations - Nepali/Expat Offer
  - ❖ **Bardia Tiger Madness** special deals for expats. Jungle Base camp, Bardia. 061-532112. Email: [junglebasecamp@yahoo.com](mailto:junglebasecamp@yahoo.com).
  - ❖ **Escape to Jomson** this summer. Rs 3,999 per person at Jomsom Mountain Resort. 4496110



**NEPALI WEATHER** by NGAMINDRA DAHAL

Better late than never. This satellite picture taken on Wednesday afternoon shows the entire subcontinent in heavy monsoon cloud cover. The two main branches of the monsoons can be clearly seen: one massing along the Arabian Sea coast of India and the other along the Bangladesh coast from the Bay of Bengal. Other tentacles have moved, a week later than scheduled, across the Himalayan midhills. After a weak start, we can expect the monsoon to gather a second wind in the coming week. Another significant feature of this monsoon was a southerly track which dumped more rains in the tarai than the midhills. Expect maximum temperatures to drop by up to five degrees with the rains.

**KATHMANDU VALLEY**

Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue
31-20	30-19	30-19	30-18	30-18

**BOOKWORM**

**The Complete Atlas of Wine** Stuart Walton  
Anness Publishing Limited, 1997  
Rs 850

This is a comprehensive, authoritative and accessible guide that will provide those new to the subject with the assurance to explore it in greater depth. The author tells you what to look for in the wines of each country and region. Accompanied throughout by vivid photographs and carefully illustrated maps, this is the complete guide to understanding and appreciating the wines of the world.

**The Book of Tea**  
Flammarion  
Rs 4,500

The history, myth and rituals of tea growing and tea drinking from the tea gardens of Burma to the tea rooms of London is charted by Anthony Burgess and a group of historians, writer and journalists in this beautifully designed book. Its exceptional selection of archival and contemporary documents makes a delightful contribution to our understanding of the world's most popular beverage.

**Brilliant Barbecues**  
Silverdale Books, 2001  
Rs 250

Essentially a guide to the art of barbecue, this book takes it from the basics to twelve sensational menus for alfresco dining. Each menu is accompanied by a work plan to make planning, preparation and serving easy. The recipes are simple, come with clear and concise instructions, and are illustrated by photographs.

Courtesy: Mandala Book Point, Kantipath, 4227711, [mandala@ccsl.com.np](mailto:mandala@ccsl.com.np)

**CLASSIFIED**

- Visit Ground Zero** Fine wines, designer candles, cards, gifts, stationery, wooden items, perfumes and more. Darbar Marg, opposite Hotel de l'Annapurna
- Visit Femlines**, the Exclusive Lingerie Store for ladies undergarments, nightwear, bathrobes and more. Ladies staff. Opposite Sajha Yatayat, Harihar Bhawan, Pulchowk. Tel: 547428
- Flowerlovers:** Flowerlovers, it's FUCHSIA time again !! See 60 beautiful varieties in bloom! Our lovely CYCLAMEN are also flowering. Only at THE BISHALNAGAR NURSERY, tel. 4431797; 5 min. from Bhatbateni Supermarket, 2min. from Bishalnagar Chowk (turn right and downhill).
- Custom Made:** Generate wealth with Feng Shui ~ Get a custom made tabletop fountain! Call 981054102
- Co-Q10 and all dietary supplements imported from Singapore & Malaysia** Contact 5520294
- To Let:** Rabibhawan area two storey house 4 bedrooms 2 bathrooms large kitchen dining living terrace lobby and porch and telephone. Contact: **Roshani** 4275180
- SAAN St. Augustines School** (Kalimpong) Alumni are having a Grind/Unwind Session on Sunday 22 June 03 @ Dechenling Garden, Thamel. Dinner Rs. 350.00. Pls. call Rajan @ 9810 22090 or Umesh @ 9810 26743 for more info.
- New York Pizza:** Free Home delivery Contact: 5539345
- PIII PC.** For Sale in good condition with 17" Philips view, especially for graphics use. Free PC table. Contact 5551333, 981053475.

For insertions ring NT Marketing at 5543333-36.

**HITS FM**

**NOTICE ISSUED IN THE INTEREST OF KATHMANDU CITY DWELLERS:**

Can you afford more fuel consumption than necessary?  
Is your vehicle emitting black smoke?

Kathmandu cannot take anymore. Please get your vehicles checked to see that it is within the standards of the green sticker norm or else you could have your blue book confiscated. This notice is brought to you by Hits FM to create awareness about the fragile environment we live in. A small step taken by you will benefit every man, woman and child.

The genius of the Wachowski brothers returns in the *Matrix Reloaded*. There are better special effects and action sequences as the sequel journeys deeper into the Matrix where more humans are free and attempting to live in the real world. Crisis strikes when the Machine Army lays siege on Zion, the last real-world city. Neo (Keanu Reeves), Trinity (Carrie Anne Moss) and Morpheus (Laurence Fishburn) have to save the day.

**JAINEPAL CINEMA**

1.45 PM, 4.15 PM, 6.45 PM  
Telephone booking: 4442220  
Online booking  
[www.jainepal.com](http://www.jainepal.com)

**BBC on FM 102.4**

Daily	2045-2115	BBC नेपाली सेवा
Daily	2245-2300	BBC नेपाली सेवा
Sun-Fri	0740- 0800	एकैछिन् (रेडियो पत्रिका)
Sun-Fri	0800- 0830	डबली (विषयगत अन्तरक्रिया)
Sun-Fri	2000- 2030	आजका कुरा (समसामयिक विषयमा बहस)
Sat	0800- 0830	शान्ति अभियान
Sat	1930- 2000	आचार विचार (भ्रष्टाचारविरुद्ध सहकार्य)
Sat	2000- 2030	कूटनीतिक मञ्च

**Radio Sagarmatha**  
P.O. Box 6958, Bakhundole, Lalitpur, Nepal  
Tel: ++977-1-545680, 545681, Fax: ++ 977-1- 530227  
E-mail: [radio@radiosagarmatha.org](mailto:radio@radiosagarmatha.org), [www.radiosagarmatha.org](http://www.radiosagarmatha.org)



# Let it pour

There are reasons to celebrate monsoons in Kathmandu.

ALL PICS: STEVE MCCURRY

**TRISHNA GURUNG**

A century ago an Englishman described the monsoon season in the subcontinent as "positively rude". When it rains it usually pours. And it's almost *de-rigueur* to complain. In fact the habit has become so ingrained that we've forgotten how to appreciate the rains.

For one thing, it means water. For parched Kathmandu where the underground water table is dropping, partially due to the hundreds of wells that locals have sunk into their backyards, the roof becomes a fountainhead of the precious fluid.

Twenty-four hour running water service is an unheard of luxury if you rely on Nepal Drinking Water Corporation. More often than not it's temperamental taps that burst forth at odd hours of the early morning. Come the monsoons and there's

plenty of water—most of which goes to waste. But we could learn a thing or two from houses right here in the Valley that promote rainwater harvesting. The most basic method is to put a container out in the rain, even an upended umbrella will do. With prudent use, vast inroads could be made into weeks of laundry.

Another monsoon bonus will be sweeter smelling fellow-commuters. In the past few weeks anyone who had to spend more than five minutes in close confines with fellow citizens needed facial masks. The desperate hoardes ran off to the pool at Satdobato or Tripureswor for a quick scrub-up (surely, you didn't think it was actually used for *swimming*, did you?). No more: for the next three months if you want a shower, just take a walk in one.

The monsoon is when we have the country to ourselves. No tourists, and the local expats have all left for their summer hols. The trekking trails are empty, since most guidebooks advise visitors to return only in autumn just in time to see the natives celebrate a series of big festivals. Don't believe the guidebooks. This is the best time to visit Nepal. The hills are emerald, there is water everywhere, the air is clear and leeches don't go above 3,300m!

There is a reason why our agricultural ancestors planned Dasain for later. Rain means regeneration and rural Nepal (that part of the country which begins just outside the Ring Road) is ankle deep in fertile, muddy sludge, planting paddy under skies that are pregnant with grey monsoon clouds. The city receives a makeover too. The dust that films every surface is washed away, wilting gardens take on a robust new verdancy and visibility



improves. After a shower the pot-holes become little lakes, and are easier to make out from a speeding bike.

Another thing that is wont to blossom at monsoon time is love. Wet hair and clothes, especially damp chiffon saris, are part of our lexicon of the sensual. While it could be a steady diet of Bollywood song-and-dance routines in the rain, many a happy couple find a socially acceptable way of demonstrating affection by surreptitiously cuddling under an umbrella. The monsoon rain can be gentle, filtered through mellow sunlight to become a flattering soft-focus frame for one's beloved. Matters are further improved by the humidity that plumps up the skin, imparting a healthy glow, no doubt often attributed to love.

Love is in the air, and so is a strange perfume: the scent of the first drops of rain hitting dry earth. We ought to take a new look at the monsoon. This season you can begin with a simple, radical step: stop complaining and start living. And if you dare, leave the umbrella indoors. Step into the rain. Feel the mud ooze between your toes as raindrops fall on your face. ♦

**McBill**  
BREAD SHORT STIX

100% Vegetarian, Baked Not Fried, No Preservatives & No Artificial Coloring

available at all leading stores

Foodline (P) Ltd., Teku Road, Kathmandu  
Tel: 4261235 / 4261433

**made in FRANCE**

- Variable power assisted steering adapts to speed
- On board computer
- Automatic rain sensing wipers
- Common rail diesel engine 1997cc

**EURO GEARS PVT. LTD.**  
**AUTOLAND PVT. LTD.**

Dhumbarahi Tel: 4371104  
Teku Road Tel: 4261235  
Fax: 4262069 4261446  
4264623

World class printing in Nepal.

**JAGADAMBA PRESS**  
Tel: 4271801, 4271802 Fax: 4271803  
Email: jpp@nptel.com.np

**KALINTA picture framing**  
classic & modern frames: imported and manufactured by Kalinta.

10am-6pm  
East side of Royal Palace  
Nag Pokhari, Kathmandu  
Tel: 4442437

Mounting Over Lamination Canvas Bonding  
**HOT PRESS**

**Beautiful at any age**

keep a PASHMINA close to your SKIN

One stop for the Best Pashmina, Best Prices, Guaranteed Quality

**NEPAL PASHMINA INDUSTRY**  
Head Office & Factory: Redcross Marg Kalmati (Near Hotel Soaltee) PO Box: 1956, Kathmandu  
Tel: 4273262, 4277023 Fax: 577-1-420092 Email: npipushpa@wink.com.np www.nepalpashminaindustry.com

**YAK & YETI KATHMANDU** Presents

# Naachghar Revisited

This summer Naachghar sizzles with the elegance and the beauty of Myrna, an international exotic dancer and the spicy culinary delights of our Chef's North Indian Delicacies.

The legacy of Royal dining continues...

Supported by: **Carlsberg** **PEPSI**

Rs. 749/- nett per person (Inclusive of Dinner)  
Date: June 2003 onwards (For a limited time only)  
Time: 7:30 PM onwards

For more information and other promotions visit our website: [www.yakandyeti.com](http://www.yakandyeti.com)  
Or call Guest relations 4248999 Extn: 2865

Buy any **McQuay** A.C ...and take away any one of these **SAMSUNG** Products

**Absolutely FREE** Scheme valid for limited period. \*Conditions Apply

Authorized Distributor: **AIRTECH Industries Pvt. Ltd.**  
Thapathali, Kathmandu, Tel: 421 9999, 424 3897 Fax: 422 8822, E-mail: [airtech@mos.com.np](mailto:airtech@mos.com.np)

Nepal Dealers:  
Pokhara - 9860-20425, Biratnagar- 535055, Nepalgunj-524200  
Dharan- 526704, Narayanghat-525873, Birgunj- 9850-22021, Hetauda-525284

**McQuay** Air Conditioning  
13880 Industrial Park Boulevard  
Merriville, IN 46449, U.S.A

**SAMSUNG DIGITall**  
everyone's invited.



## Under My Hat

by Kunda Dixit

# Shakespeare in the Valley

Having been appointed Special Envoy to Nepal, Sir William Shakespeare has been making frequent trips to Kathmandu to help us figure out whether the drama unfolding here is a tragedy or comedy. With his vast literary skills and his first-hand experience in writing about intrigue and conspiracy at the highest levels of government in post-democracy England for the last 500 years, Sir William is the right man for the job. We caught up with him for a breakfast meeting at one of the local hotels for an exclusive interview:

[Alarums. Enter Waiter.]

Sir William. Hark, thou knave, wherefore be'th our cheese omelette and OJ?

Waiter. It is still being cooketh, m'lord, gird up thy loins for it shall arrive anon.

Sir William. Have you no wit, no manners, no honesty, but to gabble like tinkers so early in the morn?

Waiter. Wait. Methought this was supposed to be a newspaper interview. [To Reporter] Why don't you ask him some questions and shut him up?

Reporter. Yes. Sir William, as the world's most noted bard, what is your take on the power struggle here?

Sir William. It does remind me of my friends, the Romans and countrymen.

Ambition should be made of sterner stuff, Yet they say they are ambitious

And they are all honourable men, Yond Cassius, for instance, with his long nose and pantaloons, has a lean and hungry look, He thinks too much, such men are dangerous.

As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt the newest state, What bloody man is that?

Reporter. Speaking of blood, how do you view the current cessation of hostilities?

Sir William. Albeit the quality of time and quarrel Have given us bloody argument.

Pox on't. How dost thou, man, Belike you slew a great number of your people? The offence is not of such a bloody nature.

A rascal, and eater of broken meats, worsted-stocking knave, one-trunk-inheriting slave, shag ear'd villain. Thou art the best of the cut-throats. Avaunt and quit my sight! My masters, are you mad? Or what are you?

Reporter. Right. How do you respond to allegations that a Foreign Hand is active in the kingdom?

Sir William. Foul whisperings are abroad, Unnatural deeds do breed unnatural troubles bring.

Is this a hand I see before me? I have thee not, yet I see thee still.

Art thou but a false creation?

Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?

Out, out, damn spot.

Reporter. What are your thoughts on the fifth and decisive phase of the anti-regression street protests?

Sir William. Drive away the vulgar from the streets.

Let's carve him as a dish fit for the gods, Not hew him as a carcass fit for hounds.

And let our hearts as subtle masters do,

Stir up their servants to an act of rage.

What we took from them, for traffic's sake

Most of the city did.

Reporter. Before I bid thee adieu, any personal observations on Beckham being sold to Real Madrid?

Sir William. Wherefore art thou, traitor? Et tu, Beckham? Then fall, England.

[Exit all. Curtains.]



## NEPALI SOCIETY

# Lama and the leopard



Tigers and rhinos have Chitwan, our wild elephants have Bardia. But where can the snow leopards call home?

Lama Karma Sonam Rinpoche has good news: snow leopards are making a comeback in Manang. The monk has been involved in conservation for the past 45 years in the remote Phu village, and his persistence is paying off.

Born in Kham, Eastern Tibet, the rinpoche spent the first 25 years of his life studying and meditating, many of those years near the base of Mt Kailash.

Eventually, after the Chinese came into Tibet, Lama Karma's family and 40 other households came to Nepal. En route, all their 70 yaks and 500 goats perished.

In 1959, when the lama first

arrived in Manang, blue sheep were rare and the locals had killed off most of the snow leopards to protect their livestock. For years, Lama Karma tried to convince the villagers of Phu that the Buddha teaches respect for all living beings. "All life is interconnected. What comes from the earth must return in a natural way, and killing does not permit this natural progression," he told them. With the snow leopards becoming increasingly rare, Lama Karma announced he would leave Phu for good. Reluctant to part with their guru, the villagers promised not to kill again. They have kept that promise to this day, and both the blue sheep and the snow leopards are back.

On World Environment Day earlier this month, Lama Karma was invited to Kathmandu by the

World Wildlife Fund to receive the prestigious Abraham Conservation Award, which recognises the contribution of dedicated grassroots conservationists. Spinning his prayer wheel steadily, the red-robed 70-year-old priest observed the gathering through his round spectacles, an island of calm in the press of dignitaries.

Kunjyo Tenzin Lama, a villager and companion to Lama Karma, has no doubt who gets the credit for the return of wildlife in Phu valley. Kunjyo looks on in pride as his guru receives the award. Nodding, he tells us, "It's due to Lama Karma's hard work that the leopards are back. He taught us to respect life in all its forms." ♦ (Sraddha Basnyat)

**कार्यालयको काम  
अनि घरघन्दा  
साथमा हरेक बिहान  
नियमित व्यायाम पनि**

**सबै सुखी. सबै खुशी  
आखिर यो सब सम्भव हुन्छ. कसरी ?**

**स्वस्थ मुटु  
आजको आवश्यकता  
यसलाई साथ दिन्छ**

**धारा**  
पूर्णतया शुद्ध तोरीको तेल